

AntiCALVIN 03

Raymond's

Systematic

Theology VOL. 3

Miner Raymond

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## **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY -- VOLUME 3**

**By Miner Raymond**

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## **BOOK SIX: ETHICS**

# **PART 1: THEORETICAL ETHICS.**

# CHAPTER 1: OBLIGATION.

IN dogmatics we discuss doctrines and inquire, What ought we to believe?

In ethics we discuss duties and inquire, What ought we to do? To the theologian, to him who has satisfactory evidence of the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the science of morals may properly be considered as simply a branch of hermeneutics—simply explanations and illustrations of Scripture commandments—and some do so regard it. Moreover, it is affirmed that all morality is based upon religion, and religion upon revelation, so that, legitimately, the only answer to the question of duty is found in the answer to the question, What saith the Word of God? Further still, it is alleged that the will of God is the ultimate ground of obligation, and that therefore there is no science in ethics beyond the simple discussion of the question, What does revelation affirm the will of God to be? On the other hand, it is affirmed, not without reason, that man is, in some sense, a law unto himself—that what man ought to do may be, at least in part, inferred from what he is; that a system of morals may be constructed from an examination of the nature of man; in other words, that ethics finds its proper basis in Psychology.

The truth, as we see it, is here the same as in dogmatics: as there are fundamental doctrines of religion adequately sustained by rational evidence constituting a system of natural religion, so there are certain prominent duties to the common intelligence obviously obligatory, which constitute a system of what may be called philosophical ethics. And as there are doctrines known and authenticated solely by revelation, constituting a system of revealed religion, so there are duties known and enforced in the same way constituting what might be called a system of Christian ethics. Nature and revelation, properly interpreted, are never antagonistic; their utterances are words proceeding out of the mouth of God, from which man may learn all things needful for faith and practice. The parallel may be extended, as natural religion is defective, rendering revelation necessary; so also is philosophical ethics, and for the same reasons—chiefly because human nature, through transgression, has

become depraved—it is evident no perfect system can be deduced from an abnormal nature.

It is manifest that in all matters of morals the ultimate appeal is to the law and the testimony; but it is also evident that it is legitimate to inquire, What of the moral is in the human mind? how came it there? and now that it is there, what can we, and what ought we to do with it? We may also inquire how far the deductions from experience harmonize with the teachings of revelation, wherein those deductions are defective, and to what extent revelation supplies the deficiency. Not necessarily that these are to be considered separately, but rather that the question of duty, whether considered abstractly, in respect to general principles, as in ethics, or in respect to particular cases, as in casuistry, is to be discussed in the light of whatever information can be obtained from these or other sources of knowledge bearing upon the subject.

The term obligation expresses the central idea; science therefore requires that this idea be treated of, first as to its origin, and secondly as to its basis or foundation. These two discussions, if truthful and exhaustive, must fully reveal the nature of obligation, and render its applications to particular cases practical and obvious.

## **1. ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF OBLIGATION.**

That man is a moral being is as evident as that he is a rational being; all men distinguish actions as right or wrong, certain things they feel they ought to do and to leave the opposite undone. Whence came this idea of right and wrong, this feeling of obligation, this sense of duty?

Some say it is an accident of education, some that it is a necessity of human nature, some that it is a modification of other ideas, some that it is a product of the judgment, and others that it pertains entirely to the sensibilities, and is a resultant of what is called conscience or the moral sense. Of those who affirm that the idea of right and wrong is a necessary result of man's nature, some designate that part of our nature which gives us this idea by the term Intuition, others by the term The Reason, and

still others by the terms Original Suggestion or Original Conception. Of those who use the term The Reason, some make no distinctions in the use of this term, and therefore, at least apparently, teach that the idea of right has the same origin as the idea of space or of time; but others make distinctions in The Reason, and give us what they call The pure Reason, The aesthetic Reason, and

The moral or practical Reason; and, of course, refer all moral ideas to the latter.

Now, in this confusion in the use of terms, it is impossible to state precisely what we mean without intimating, to some extent, what we accept as a true statement of that part of psychology which pertains to the origin of ideas.

And, first, we would have it in discussions of this kind distinctly understood, and kept always in view, that mind is one and indivisible; it is only a convenience of language that we speak of the judgment, the reason, the imagination, and the will; it is the same one and indivisible mind that perceives, compares, abstracts, clarifies, infers, loves, hates, and volitionates in choice action. Mind, considered as a somewhat which is capable of apprehending the qualities of matter, is called perception; considered as capable of apprehending relations, it is called judgment; and so of all the so-called faculties. Our capacity for certain functions we call the intellect, for others the sensibility, and for still others the will—not that mind is divided into three parts as a building is divided into apartments, but that the same one and indivisible mind for convenience in science and language, considered as performing certain functions, is called by one name, and considered as performing other functions it has another name—the mind's power to perform a function is called a faculty. Secondly, we affirm that, in giving the genesis of thought, in all cases the last resort is a reference to the nature of mind itself. Formerly writers on Psychology were accustomed, when discussing the origin of ideas, to treat first of perception, referring to it all our knowledge of the qualities of matter; then of judgment, referring to it our apprehensions of relations; then of reason, treating it as the source of all abstractions and inferences; then of imagination, the source of all ideals, and then, as last and highest of the intellectual faculties, they discoursed about the nature of mind

itself, calling it intuition, the reason, original conception, or something else as best pleased the writer himself; and to this so-called faculty was referred all necessary ideas and truths, such ideas as space, time, beauty, virtue, and all those truths which are called axioms and first principles. Many treatises now extant, and used as authoritative standards, still do substantially this same thing. But more modern writers have discovered that this is not scientific, since it is manifest that the first apprehension of an external object necessitates the apprehension of being, of self, of space, of substance, etc., as contemporaneous with ideas of color, form, and magnitude; hence they treat of intuition or the reason in connection with perception, and carry it along with them through all subsequent discussions as indispensable to and inseparable from any and all processes of thought, emotion, or volition. This is right, corresponds with the facts in the case, harmonizes with the laws of mind, and is, therefore, more scientific than the former methods.

But a difficulty still remains, for it may be asked, Why refer the idea of space to the nature of mind itself any more than the idea of color? If it be asked, Why is it that when a visible object affects the organ of sight the mind has an apprehension of color, form, and magnitude? the only answer possible is that it is of the nature of mind to be so impressed when such conditions occur; and it may be added, that it is also of the nature of mind that it contemporaneously, under the same conditions; conceives the idea of space. To our thought the only basis of classification in mental phenomena is similarity in the objective thing conceived. Qualities of matter constitute a class. The mind, considered as a power capable of apprehending these qualities, is called a faculty, and named perception. The things conceived as underlying conditions of these qualities, such as substance and space, constitute another class in mental phenomena, and the mind, considered as a power capable of conceiving these ideas, is called a faculty, and named intuition. So of all other so-called faculties. We affirm that in all cases the origin of ideas, or the genesis of thought, is given when the conditions on which the thought arises are specified. And these conditions being given, nothing remains but to affirm that under such conditions it is of the nature of mind that such thoughts should arise.

The above considerations being kept in mind, the usual classifications of

mental phenomena and the terms usually employed to designate the faculties by which said phenomena become possible and actual are of service in mental science. It is well that mind be regarded as intellect, sensibility, and will; that intellect be considered as regulative, presentative, representative, and elaborative; and so of the remaining faculties. The reader of these pages is supposed to be familiar with the usual classifications of phenomena and the usual designation of faculties. The most scientific and satisfactory classification and arrangement of mental powers and faculties given in brief outline, known to the present writer, maybe found in Hopkins's "Outline Study of Man," to which the reader is referred.

It will be sufficient for our present purpose to speak of what is called the regulative faculty, or "The Reason." This is so called because it distinguishes man as a *rational* being. Upham, naming the same faculty "original suggestion," says: "This is a convenient term for stating the fact that the mind on certain occasions, from its own inherent energy, gives rise to certain thoughts."

The substance of this whole matter is this: When the mind has in contemplation sensible objects, from a necessity of its nature—because mind is what it is—by a necessary law of thought, ideas of substance, space, being, resemblance, number, etc., arise in the mind. The power the mind possesses to give rise to such ideas is called a faculty, and is named "Pure Reason." In like manner, when an intellectual apprehension is of such a nature as to affect the sensibilities, when motion is excited, because mind is what it is, ideas of the beautiful, the good, the ludicrous, and other similar ideas necessarily arise in the mind. The power the mind has to give rise to such ideas is called a faculty, and is named "The aesthetic Reason." Again, when two or more objects of the intellect and sensibility combined are presented to the will as objects of choice and action, when occasion for volition in choice and action occurs, then, because mind is what it is, because of the nature or necessary constitution of mind itself, ideas of personality, obligation, duty, responsibility, necessarily arise. The power the mind has to give rise to such ideas is called a faculty, and is named "The Moral or Practical Reason."

We have thus endeavored to make plain what is intended when it is said

that ideas of right, duty, obligation, responsibility, are intuitions; and may here say in a word that the thing intended is that they are ideas which on the occurrence of the proper occasion must necessarily arise because of the nature of mind itself. Henceforth, because the term "reasoning" universally signifies a process so entirely different from anything intended when the term "the reason" is used, we shall discard this latter term, and for the want of any better, or because more readers will understand what is meant than by the use of any other term, we shall use the word "intuition" as the name of the faculty to which moral ideas are to be referred; and in view of what is said above it will not be necessary to mark the distinction between intellectual and moral intuitions.

We have now found the faculty to which the origin of moral ideas is to be referred; we have found the place in mental processes where the idea of obligation has its birth. When the self, the man, is so circumstanced that he is called upon to exercise free will in choice between two or more objects —

objects which, being apprehended by the intellect, are such as affect the sensibilities—then, and not till then, there, and nowhere else, the mind, from its own inherent nature, gives birth to the idea of obligation. But it is evident we have not yet given a full account of the origin of the idea; for it may still be asked what is that in the objects of choice which obligates the man? A full answer to this question involves the doctrine of the *ground of obligation*, which we shall discuss hereafter in a separate section. It is only requisite in this place to specify the occasions on which the intuitive faculty is so called into exercise as to give rise to the idea in question.

When two objects of thought are presented for choice, and one of them is conceived as promising a greater good than the other, the man instantly feels obligated to choose that which promises the greater good. Good is satisfaction in consciousness; it is that that best harmonizes with the ends of being. It is not essential to a feeling of obligation that man should know infallibly what is his highest good, nor that he should know certainly in any given case that one thing is more productive of good than another, but only that he so conceive it. If to his mind, if in his apprehensions of the case, one object of choice is more in harmony with

the end of his being, is productive of higher satisfaction in consciousness, is conducive of greater good to himself, to others, and to God, he has at once an apprehension of obligation; he feels he ought to choose the higher good; he feels approved if he do so choose, and condemned if he does not.

The conditions, then, rendering the birth of the idea of obligation a possibility are, an intelligent sentient being, endowed with free will or the power of choice, and the presentation to such a being of objects of choice which differ in apprehended excellencies. These conditions existing, the idea is a spontaneity; it arises by the necessities of the case. Or, to give the case another putting, man is amoral being by creation. He has a moral nature; a nature which, on the occurrence of the proper occasion, gives rise to moral sentiments. He is by nature capable of certain intellectual apprehensions which excite emotions and desires. These desires are motives to volition; they tend to move the mind towards choice and action. Will is free. It may do or refrain from doing, may make a selection with an alternative. An election being thus possible, the moral nature obligates, becomes law, is imperative, promises reward, threatens punishment; in case of obedience fulfills its promises, and in case of disobedience executes its threats.

The circumstances which may bring into existence the state of mind above described are numerous and varied, but the binding force of obligation terminates always on volition in choice. Here is diversity of object, freedom in selection, and here alone is responsible power. Obligation commands power to act in accordance with highest motive, and forbids that power to yield to the promptings of lesser motive.

Let the above be further illustrated.

When one apprehends a natural normal relation of dependence between himself and another there intuitively arises a sense of obligation towards him upon whom he is dependent—obligation to avoid giving offense, to reverence the superior power, and obey the superior will. This feeling is natural in children towards their parents, and in all men towards God. Here it is manifest that the circumstantial occasion is the apprehension of a relation; but it is equally manifest that the obligation lies upon the will;

and that the obligation is apprehended only when choice is presented, choice between the conduct indicated and its opposite.

Again: when anyone receives a favor bestowed in kindness and good will, he instantly intuitively feels obligated to be grateful towards his benefactor. Insensibility in such a case is inhuman, brutish. The common sense of mankind recognizes an obligation of binding force. Gratitude is not only fit, proper, amiable, but in the common estimation it is such a demand of human nature that its opposite is positively censurable, and when exercised towards God justly punishable. Here the circumstantial occasion is the reception of a benefit; but, as in the cases above, the obligation lies upon the choice between gratitude and its opposite, and the obligation is not apparent till the choice is presented.

Again: when one enters with another into the relation of contracting parties, he is conscious of a sense of obligation to fulfill his part of the conditions stipulated; and if he voluntarily refuse or neglect to do so he is conscious of self-condemnation, acknowledges demerit, and feels that he is justly punishable. Here, as before, the circumstances are different, but the apprehension of obligation is in the same place and manner as before. Free will in the exercise of intelligent choice between a good that is apprehended as greater and one apprehended as less is the occasion on which the intuitive faculty gives the idea of obligation.

### OBJECTION.

Should it be said that the idea of obligation is not the same as the idea of right we answer, This is true, but is no objection to what has been said respecting the idea of obligation. The idea of right will be discussed in the section next following, on the ground of obligation.

The only objectors to the theory above advocated whose objections deserve special notice are those who deny that man has a moral nature, and affirm that all moral sentiments and opinion are mere accidents of education.

These objectors—or, rather, their denials and affirmations—will be discussed in the chapter on Conscience.

## 2. THE GROUND OF OBLIGATION.

All acts involving obligation or moral responsibility are acts of choice. Choice is the sole theater of morals, so far as responsible doing or not doing is concerned. The Scriptures, indeed, use the term sin in two senses —one pertaining to conduct, as when they say sin is a transgression of the law, and the other pertaining to character, as when they say it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me; but it is obvious that a man is responsible for his character no farther than his character is self-imposed, and he forms his own character in no other way than by his moral choices. A man is no more responsible for being what he can not be than he is for doing what he can not do. The terms personality, obligation, responsibility, right, wrong, guilt, innocence, all arise out of, center in, are founded upon, moral choices. And in the proper sense of the terms the same thing may be said of virtue, vice, holiness, sin, righteousness, and unrighteousness.

Assuming that we have found the place and nature of obligation, we next inquire after its basis, ground, or reason. Why are we obligated to do this or that? What is the reason why we are required to do one thing rather than another? This question is sometimes considered the same as the question, Why is this right and that wrong? but some writers insist that if any act be right there is something back of the rightness that makes it right. We inquire, therefore, after that somewhat back of the rightness, What is it that makes certain acts of choice right and their opposites wrong? Again, sometimes this question is carelessly identified with the question of guilt or innocence; but these depend upon the intentions of the agent. We inquire after that characteristic in the object of the agent's intentions which determines whether he be virtuous, innocent, or guilty. What is the ground of obligation? the basis of moral virtue?

### THEORIES.

1. The first theory we notice is that which affirms that the basis of virtue is

the will of God, that God's will is the ultimate and sole ground of moral obligation. It is said God's will is first cause of all things. It is impossible, therefore, even in thought, to find anything anterior or exterior to the eternal self-existent will. It is said what God requires is obligatory, and the reason why it is obligatory is that he requires it: And by the necessity of the case this is the first and last word that can be said on the subject.

A theory different in statement, and in a sense really different, but ultimately coming to well-nigh the same thing, is as follows: "The primary idea of goodness is the essential, not the creative, will of God; the divine will in its essence is infinite love, mercy, patience, truth, faithfulness, rectitude, spirituality, and all that is included in holiness, which constitutes the inmost nature of God. The holiness of God, therefore, neither precedes his will nor follows it, but is his will itself. The good is not a law for the divine will so that God wills it because it is good, neither is it a creation of his will so that it becomes good because he wills it, but it is the nature of God from everlasting to everlasting." On this theory we remark: That God's command is binding no one can doubt; that he has commanded is sufficient reason why his creatures should obey, and sufficient ground for the affirmation that what is commanded is right: "The law of the Lord is perfect, the statutes of the Lord are right, the commandment of the Lord is pure, the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." It may be added that for all the practical purposes of piety and morality it is sufficient to say this is right because God has commanded it, and that is wrong because God has forbidden it.

The fact of a divine command is adequate proof of obligatoriness; but it is not so clear that the command constitutes the ground or reason of the obligation. For it is not conceivable that duty so depends upon the arbitrary will of God as that it is possible for God to reverse the case. Hatred towards our neighbor could not be made right by any volition possible. That God has commanded his creatures to exercise mutual good will one toward another is sufficient evidence of obligation, sufficient reason why his creatures should obey; but his command is not the ground or reason of the obligation, for if it were it would be their duty to hate each other on the supposition that God should so will.

Again, that duty exists because God wills it, is not the last word that may

be said on the subject because it may be asked, Why should man obey God?

and this question admits of an intelligent and significant answer. It may be said man is obligated to obey God because God is his creator and preserver; which relation confers the natural right of unlimited possession, and imposes the obligation of universal obedience. It may be said man is under obligation to love God supremely because God is infinitely lovely. Again, it may be said man is obligated to love God supremely and his neighbor as himself because love is promotive of the highest good, whether that good be the glory of the Creator, or the good of the creature, or the glory of God in, through, and by, the good of his creatures. Without presuming to announce categorically what is and what is not, and reminding the reader that in all questions of human science *the question is*, How am I obliged to think it? we admit on the one hand that the declared will of God, even in the absence of any other reason, is adequate ground for obedience, so that it is not needful for any practical purpose of piety or morality to seek for anything anterior or exterior to God as the ground or reason of his commandments; we affirm, on the other hand, that it is impossible to think that duty so depends upon the arbitrary will of God as that he might reverse the case and make duty the opposite of what it is. We do not conceive it necessary to postulate anything that is not God, which is to him a law, governing him in his conduct. He is himself to himself, a sufficient law; and yet, as in mathematics we think of principles that are immutable and eternal, so that we do not conceive the equality of the angles of a triangle to two right angles as a resultant of the divine volition, but as a necessity, a somewhat which could not not be; so we are compelled to think of moral principles as immutable, eternal, and necessary.

Sentient and intelligent beings supposed as actually existent, and it is impossible to conceive that it could be otherwise than that they are under obligations of mutual good will.

An argument for the theory that the will of God is ultimate, common among theologians and put forth with a confidence that indicates the opinion that the argument is decisive, is, that any other theory (for example, that the good is ultimate) gives a variable rule—a rule

dependent upon the opinions of men as to what is for the greatest good. We reply, this argument is conclusive against the affirmation that man's judgment of what is for the greatest good is more reliable than the declared will of God; or, in other words, against the affirmation that man needs no revelation in words, and therefore hasn't any, because his own judgment of what is good is an adequate rule of practice. But it is no argument against the affirmation that good is ultimate, that that is right which is promotive of good, and that God has commanded thus and thus because what he has commanded is good, and therefore right. But, again, it is said, inquiring after the good or the right is a roundabout way of learning duty. We reply, this is undoubtedly so as compared with consulting a written revelation. The shortest, most reliable and every way best method of learning duty, for him who has a Bible in his hands is to consult its pages. This is so every time; but this is not saying that what the Bible requires has no other foundation but the arbitrary will of God.

2. *Utilitarianism*.— here are several views of the subject now under discussion, all of which may be and are characterized as utilitarian. Chief among them are the two following, and perhaps all may be classified as belonging either to the one or the other. The one finds the basis of obligation in the well-being of the subject; that is, each individual person is obligated to do what is for his own best good—and any course of conduct that is to him obligatory is so because it is for his own good. It is said,

"Virtue is doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God and for the sake of everlasting happiness;" "intelligent voluntary beings never act voluntarily, without acting from a regard to their own well-being; there can no more be motive except in form of good or happiness to the agent than there can be motive that is no motive." The other view, above referred to, finds the basis of obligation in the universal good—the greatest good of all; of God, the universe, and self; "satisfaction in consciousness of all being, self included;" of God, our fellow-men, and ourselves. The first of these makes self-love, and the second benevolence, the governing motive in all moral action.

Of the first we have to say, it is so incomplete that it is wholly unsatisfactory. Dr. Paley's definition of virtue is good as far as it goes, but

is inadequate, and its chief defect is in a vital point. To do good to mankind is a good thing in itself, to do so in obedience to God is right and proper, and everlasting happiness is a suitable motive for action; but when a man does good to mankind even though he do it in obedience to God, if his own everlasting happiness be his sole motive, it may be doubted whether his act is virtuous or even innocent. He certainly does not meet his entire obligation, for we are obligated to seek to promote, and to promote as far as opportunity and ability allow, the good of mankind for the sake of the good itself. This theory is so evidently out of harmony with that which requires us to deny ourselves and take up our cross, forsaking all that we have, and with the affirmation that whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for Christ's sake shall find it, that we may dismiss it as fatally defective, without further discussion.

Of the second theory, that which makes benevolence the governing motive in all virtuous acts, and the good that is sought, the end of being, and the ground of obligation, we shall speak at length further on. We have introduced this theory in this place because its opposers have been pleased to characterize it as utilitarian; and, for the same reason, we here remark that it is undoubtedly utilitarian, using this word in its proper sense. But when it is so characterized as an argument against it, the term utilitarian is used as synonymous with the term selfish, or as necessarily involving that idea.

Using the term in its proper sense, it is no objection to the theory that it may be said to be utilitarian.

3. In the above we have said some find the ground of obligation in the will of God, some in self-interest, and others in the general good. We come now to notice another theory, one which finds the object of our search in The Right, called sometimes the rightarian theory. This conceives an eternal, immutable principle of right, necessarily arising out of the nature of things—

sometimes called the eternal fitness of things. Whatever accords with this principle of right is virtuous, and virtuous because it accords therewith—the whole of duty is to do right, and rightness is sole motive in all moral

acts.

The will of God is our rule of practice, because he always wills what is right, and wills it because it is right. The good of self and the good of others are proper motives for action, because what is right is always promotive of those ends; and, conversely, whatever is promotive of those ends is right—right not because thus promotive, but right in itself. Virtue and happiness are universally and inseparably connected; but virtue is not virtue because happiness follows from it, but is virtue in itself. We are to do right though the heavens fall, always comforted with the assurance that they never win fall, since in all cases godliness is profitable. The welfare of self, the good of others, and the honor of God, are infallibly secured to right-doers, not because the right has anything to do with these things—it is right in itself, immutable and eternal—but because somehow we know that good always follows the right.

The chief argument for this theory has been already intimated; it is that it is impossible to think otherwise; that we cannot conceive of abstract essential virtue as dependent upon volition; virtue and vice are not so dependent upon volition as that volition can reverse the case and make virtue vice and vice virtue. The reply to this has also been intimated above; it is that holiness is not a law external to God, governing him, so that he may be said to will thus and thus because it is right; nor, on the other hand, is holiness a creation of will, so that it may be said this and that are right because God wills them, but holiness is God himself. God's will is God himself, from everlasting to everlasting. This, as we see it, is an unintelligible speculation, or, if there be a thought in it, the thought is lost among the inscrutable mysteries of the divine nature.

Another argument for the doctrine of an abstract right, also for the idea of a moral instinct, and as against utilitarianism, is found in the process of moral education. It is said we do not attempt the education of children and heathen by showing to their intellect that virtue is for the general good, but that we simply call attention to the relations subsisting between them and others, trusting that their own moral instincts will indicate the obligations which arise out of those relations. For example, a mother does not attempt by argument to convince a refractory child that it is for the general good of the family that children obey their parents, in order to

educate the child and secure the desired obedience; but she says, My child, will you disobey your mother? giving her voice, as her nature dictates, a slight tinge of the semitone, and giving large quantity and the circumflex accent to the words *child* and *mother*; and when this fails, she applies the rod.

To this it may be replied, that in such a case the appeal is to mere animal instinct, and there is no moral consideration in the case. The whipping is merely the regulation of machinery; it is as when a balky horse is whipped, he is whipped to make him go, he is not whipped to punish him for not going.

The chief objection to the rightarian theory is, as Wesley puts it, that to speak of "the eternal relations of things existing in time is little less than a contradiction." Wesley's point is, that all relations being the product of the divine will, all principles involved in those relations, and, of course, all obligations arising out of them must depend upon the divine will, so that a reference to the will of God is the last word that can be said. We repeat here what we have said above, this is not the last word, for the question, Why should man obey God? is significant.

Another objection is found in a criticism on the sense of the word right. It is said right is a quality of an action, and therefore cannot be predicated of a principle, specially of an eternal principle. It is further alleged that right is according to rule, or that that course of action is right which secures the end sought—it is, therefore, not predictable of anything but actions. To this we say, It seems, at most, nothing more than a dictionary question, and does not at all affect the merits of the question in dispute; and, moreover, we allege that the term right is, in common use, employed in a significant sense that admits of the term *the right*, and does signify what may be called an eternal principle.

Again, it is affirmed that no man can in thought even predicate the right of any action without conceiving of something back of the rightness which makes it right. This seems to be so, and constitutes a valid objection to the rightarian theory, and puts us on the further search after that somewhat which is the thing itself sought after in all this discussion. Is the good that thing?

4. If we say the ground of obligation is not the arbitrary will of God, not self-interest, not an abstract, essential right, may we say it is the universal good, the *summum bonum* of all sentient, intelligent beings?

It pertains to a rational being that he act for a reason; or, in other words, all rational acts are put forth in view of some end. Ends are either subordinate or ultimate. A man seeks knowledge that he may have power to do good; in such a case knowledge and power are subordinate ends and doing good an ultimate end. An ultimate end may be supreme; that ultimate end which a man seeks above all other ends is his supreme end. We always determine a man's character by that which we conceive as his supreme end. If wealth be his governing motive, we say he is avaricious; if power, ambitious; if he seek, above all things, the good of mankind, we say he is a philanthropist; if the well-being of his own country be his supreme end, we say he is patriotic; if he have a single eye to the honor and glory of God, we characterize him as a pious man—in a word, men are humanitarian, pious, benevolent, patriotic, social, domestic, selfish, ambitious, covetous, or whatever may be their character, according to that which they choose as the supreme end or governing motive of their lives. Now, is it conceivable that a man can choose as the supreme end of all his acts in life anything higher than the universal good; or, more definitely, the happiness of all, the satisfaction in consciousness of all sentient, intelligent beings, the good of all—God, fellow-men, and self? We think not. The only reply to this, as we see it, worthy of notice, is, that holiness, and not happiness, is the true and supreme end of being.

To this we have nothing more to say, than that the Scriptures declare that God is love. Love is the fulfilling of the law; all the law and the prophets are summed up in one word, *love*. Now love being the sum total of all obligation, and good being the supreme end which love seeks, it would seem to be the most natural thing in the world to say that the universal good is the ground of obligation. In conclusion, if this be not the true solution of the problem, we see not to the contrary; but the discussion is fruitless and the question itself useless. It may be that man does not know, and in his present life cannot and need not know, why God made him, what is the end of his being or ground of his obligation. It may be sufficient that man knows as well as he knows that he has a being, that he is created under law, under obligation, and that that to which he is

obligated, that which he is bound to do, is made to him so plain that he that runneth may read; duty is made so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool in other matters, need not err in this.

# CHAPTER 2: CONSCIENCE.

## 1. DEFINITIONS.

THIS term is used by all who think, write, or speak on the subject of morals, and it might be expected that it were well understood, and that all would agree as to its meaning. But strange, and yet not strange, there are but few terms in common use concerning which there is a greater diversity of opinion, or more extended controversies. The common acceptation of the term, the sense in which those use it who are not careful about formulating thought scientifically, makes it signify all of that part of man's nature by which he is capable of moral ideas, emotions, and affections. In this sense it pertains both to the intellect and the sensibility, and is the man himself thinking and feeling in the domain of morals. Man is by nature endowed with power or ability to apprehend a moral quality in human actions, to determine in judgment whether a given course of conduct be right or wrong; he feels an impulse towards the right and a restraint from the wrong. When he does well he feels approved; when ill, condemned. All this he does necessarily; that is, by a necessity of his nature. In other words, he has a moral nature, and this is called conscience. Or, to state the same thing differently, his mind performs these discriminating impulsive and retributive functions. The power it has to do so is called a faculty, and is named Conscience.

According to another view, conscience is a department of the sensibility solely, and is conceived as a kind of moral instinct by which man knows instinctively what is right and what is wrong. It is that by which we are able to apprehend the existence of a moral quality in human actions; a faculty which pronounces, *ex cathedra*, that this is right and that is wrong. It is to the moral quality of actions what sight is to color, the power of apprehending it.

In this we have a defect and an error. That there is a moral quality in actions, that this is a single and separate quality, and that man has the

power of perceiving it, no one can question. If any purpose of science requires that this power of perceiving the moral quality of actions be separated from other faculties and a specific name be given to it no one need object; but if use gives law to language the term conscience ought not to be the term employed for that purpose, since this is but one of several functions usually ascribed to it. Again, if it be insisted that this function be regarded as instinctive, so that we may speak of conscience in itself or in any of its functions as a moral instinct, analogy would require that we call man's power of apprehending the *true* as an intellectual *instinct*, and his power of apprehending the *beautiful* as an aesthetic instinct. Intuition is a better term. Ideas of the true, the beautiful, the good, and the right, arise in the mind spontaneously on the occurrence of their appropriate occasion; and we have, to designate the faculties which give us these ideas, the pure, aesthetic, and moral intuitions; or, if the reader prefer, the pure reason, the aesthetic reason, and the moral reason. But chiefly, the word instinct usually leads the mind too far away from man's rational nature to be appropriate in anything pertaining to moral character and responsibility.

Again, conscience is sometimes defined as "the judgment exercised in the department of morals." Defined thus, it belongs wholly to the intellect, and is only, one of the intellectual faculties exercised on a restricted class of objects. That this is defective, is too narrow a limitation, is so evident that reply is evidently unnecessary.

Still another definition may be mentioned. "Conscience is moral consciousness, or consciousness in the department of morals." The author who thus defines the term defines consciousness not as the notice the mind takes of its own operation, not as the mind knowing itself, but as the self, the ego, knowing that it is itself that knows. The formula of consciousness is not "I know that I know," but, "I know that it is I that know." Having thus defined consciousness, he defines conscience to be *it* in the department of morals; that is, conscience is the mind itself knowing itself as the subject of moral apprehensions, of self-approbation or of guilt and remorse, according as there is in consciousness right or wrong emotions and affections. With great deference to the high authority holding these views (if we have rightly apprehended and fairly represented them), we are obliged to say that, to our thought, this leaves

the term conscience well-nigh useless, and fails to give the faculty due prominence and distinctness.

Our preference is very decidedly in favor of attaching to the term conscience the meaning given to it in common parlance. With or without definition, we mean the man himself; as intellect, apprehending moral qualities and pronouncing moral judgments; as sensibility, impelling toward duty, restraining from crime, rewarding virtue, and punishing vice.

## 2. FUNCTIONS.

The functions of conscience may be distinguished as discriminating, impulsive, and retributive. As we have now passed over the region of speculation, and have discussed the more abstruse and difficult ethical questions, we must at the expense of some slight repetitions discuss these functions with special distinctness and definiteness; and, First, of the discriminating faculty.

We commence at the beginnings of mental phenomena. Perceptions, with pure intuition, present the percepts and concepts we have of the material world. Memory and imagination re-present them. The inner sense or consciousness gives us the apprehensions we have of mental phenomena and, with intuition, what we know of mind itself. Comparison, abstraction, and reasoning, with pure intuition, elaborate these apprehensions of the material and the mental into all the various conceptions of which pure intellect is capable. When these conceptions, or any of them, are of a nature to affect the sensibility—that is, to produce emotions and desires, and suggest some course of action with reference to them—the sensibility, with esthetic intuition, gives rise to an apprehension of a good to be secured by the course of action proposed.

Thus, the intellect and sensibility combined may be said to present to the will an occasion for the exercise of choice. The will is to determine whether it will adopt or reject the proposed course of action.

At this point we must not fail to remind ourselves that the will is the man

himself. Here we find personality; a being capable not only of the above mentioned antecedent intellec[t]ions, emotions, and desires; capable of apprehending this diversity of objects, the acceptance or rejection of the conduct proposed; but also a being endowed with power to choose, with freedom both to and from the proposed action. And now we have to add one other element; namely, that in these presentations of intellect and sensibility combined there be a distinct apprehension that in the proposed action there is a greater good than in its opposite.

Under these conditions the moral intuition gives rise to the idea of obligation. In other words, the conscience, the mind, the man, discriminates between duty and its contrary; he determines what he ought to do; he perceives a moral quality in the action proposed.

The reader cannot fail to see that this is the precise point where the controversy respecting the ground of obligation comes in. Is the good, or the right, the sole primary and ultimate ground of obligation? if one be primary and the other secondary, which is which? or may they both be co-ordinate, contemporaneous, and inseparable?

That the idea of right, using the word in the most common acceptation, is involved in the idea of obligation, cannot be questioned. If the right be an abstract eternal principle, or an ultimate separate and single quality of actions, then it is plain that the moral intuition is a power of perceiving that principle or that quality, and by a slight liberty in the use of words might be called a moral instinct; though, as objected above, the term instinct is too exclusive of the rational to be properly used in this connection.

Perhaps, after all, when human science shall have mastered this difficult problem more perfectly, it will be seen that the right and the good are co-ordinate grounds of obligation. Whether holiness be for the sake of happiness, or whether happiness be an accident of holiness, we know they are inseparably connected. Perhaps they are eternally co-ordinate.

The apprehension of obligation to pursue any given course of conduct arises out of a conception that that course of conduct will be productive of good. This involves, or is, an expectation of results. Hence, in all cases where moral obligation is apprehended we find there is in the possession

of the mind such an expectation, and that that expectation is conceived as a matter of invariable certainty; that is to say, law is perceived—a certain and invariable connection between the moral quality of actions and its results.

Let the distinction between natural and moral results be here distinguished.

Two men make the same false statement, one believing it true, the other knowing that it is false. The falseness of the statement has its natural result; namely, the deception of the hearer, and this is common to both; but in the latter case there is a moral quality involved in the intention to deceive, and from this there results self-condemnation and the censure of all who have knowledge of that intention. In like manner, universally in mortals, there is this recognition of law, found in this expectation of results; and connected with this, inseparable from it, and in part involved in it, are the common ideas of responsibility, merit, demerit, promised reward, and threatened punishment.

Second, the impulsive power of conscience. The word obligation itself expresses to all minds some degree of impulse or feeling; and to the common apprehension, as I think, the impulse is the chief thing intended by the term.

We seldom speak of the *conception* of obligation or duty, but most generally say we have a *sense* of duty, a feeling of obligation. We say we feel we ought to do thus and thus. Of course the intellectual apprehension is antecedent to the emotion, but the latter follows the former in such quick succession that no distinction of time is cognizable in consciousness, and the feeling is that that is chiefly cognized.

The conditions, then, occurring on which ideas of personality, freedom, causation, duty, obligation, responsibility, merit, demerit, reward, and punishment arise, there instantly arises an impulse in the sensibility which we express in English by the terms ought and ought not. Every man knows what this feeling is—it is simple, unique, and distinctly separate; it is known only by experience, and cannot be logically defined. By it man is impelled towards action; he is not compelled to act; it is an *impulsion*, not a *compulsion*. It may be at once both impulse and

restraint; it may be considered as either an impulse towards duty or a restraint from the contrary; it may be antagonized or favored by impulses not belonging to itself; the appetites, passions and desires may favor or oppose. Happy the man whose appetites, desires, and all that is in him, harmonize with his convictions of duty and impulses towards it!

It is by the impulsive power of conscience that its presence is most distinctly cognized in consciousness. Other impulses may antagonize each other, as when avarice conflicts with appetite, but conscience being absent, the contest dwindles into insignificance, the strongest impulse prevails, and the man becomes the willing slave of the prevailing impulse. But when conscience is in opposing contact with appetite, passion, desire, or self-love, strength of impulse is of little or no account; authority utters its commands and there is no peaceful response but obedience; though opposition be powerful and persistent, there is no surcease; conscience will not cowardly retire, but in perfect self-possession holds the position of authoritative requirement, and effectually secures accordance or promptly executes penalty.

The discriminating function of conscience may be performed in cool deliberation, its intuitive cognitions and resultant judgments may be proclaimed with unimpassioned voices; before consciousness becomes distinctly cognizant of the process, sensibility is awakened, and then the authoritative ought or ought not takes its place of power, and holds the man firmly and steadily to his responsibility. Here more than anywhere man recognizes his personality, knows himself as a moral being, as having a moral nature, as determining by his own free, unconstrained volitions the question of his character and through this the question of his destiny.

Third, the retributive power of conscience. When will has made its choice, the morality of the case, so far as the agent is concerned, has transpired, is decided. If we may not say that the executive *nisus*, the exertion of the power of will in action takes place necessarily, we may say it takes place as a matter of course. In all cases where the choice is for immediate action, and the action be possible, it follows instanter, immediately successive to the act of choice. But a man may determine to-day what he will do to-morrow. Again, he may choose, may decide to do, what he may

find on trial he has no power to do. In all cases, whether the act be performed or not, the agent's responsibility for the moral character of the act is found in his choice, and is determined by the end he proposes or the motive in view of which he made his choice. The act being performed actually in action, or virtually in choice, results in consciousness follow sooner or later. Memory, or the mind's retentiveness, holds the deed in view, and from the retributive power of conscience there arises self-approbation in case of well-doing, or condemnation, remorse, in case of ill-doing.

Feelings of approval or remorse are not accidents of education; they arise in the mind necessarily, because man is a rational, sentient, and moral being. A man who is incapable of these is idiotic or insane, or he has so abused his moral nature that he has become brutish or diabolical. Human nature that is normal, or maintains any appreciable approximation to a normal condition, becomes more or less conscious of the convictions and impulses which we herein ascribe to conscience or man's moral nature; no man can avoid them, they belong to his constitution, as it is by creation. Self-approval, since it assures of divine approbation and all blessings accruing from the divine favor, and also assures of approbation from our fellow-men, yields the highest pleasure man enjoys; and remorse, for a similar opposite reason, gives the severest pain man can suffer. The pleasures and pains which constitute the retributions of conscience demonstrate the existence of a moral nature in man beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt, as do also the convictions of the discriminating faculty and the authoritative mandates of the impulsive.

But objections have been made to the affirmation that man is, by nature, a moral being, and it has been affirmed that conscience is a creature of education; hence, it is needful that these objections and this affirmation be noticed, which we proceed to do under another section.

### **3. EXISTENCE OF CONSCIENCE.**

When it is admitted that men do discriminate between right and wrong, that they feel impulses which they express by the terms ought and ought

not, and that they have opinions and sentiments of approval and disapproval; and when conscience is defined to be that faculty or a combination of faculties by which man is capable of such discriminating impulsive and retributive convictions and emotions, it would seem that all controversy about the existence of conscience is precluded. Man naturally performs certain functions; this is admitted matter of fact. The fact that he performs them is proof that he has the power of doing so; that power we call conscience—this is, of course, saying there is a conscience.

The controversy on the question, "Is there a conscience?" arose from a stand-point different from the above. Conscience was regarded as a sort of instinct, infallibly indicating what is abstractly right or wrong, just as a chemical test indicates the presence of an acid or an alkali, turning always towards the abstract right, just as the needle turns towards the pole. All implanted principles were regarded as instinctive; thus maternal love was regarded as a blind instinct, impelling the mother to act irrespective of all rational thought. Dr. Franklin, because his mother, not recognizing him after long absence, refused on a cold, stormy winter night to entertain him at her house, declared that he had demonstrated that there was no such thing as natural affection. Now it is plain that he had demonstrated that maternal love is not such as will tell a mother who her son is when she has no other means of knowing; but he did not demonstrate that when a mother knows her son, it is not natural for her to regard him, on this sole account, as she would not regard him if he was not her son. To affirm that man has a moral nature, that there is such a thing as a natural conscience, is not to affirm that that moral nature is a blind instinct acting irrespective of the intellect. All moral impulses are awakened by antecedent intellections—the moral nature includes intellect, sensibility, and will.

## OBJECTIONS.

The objections against the doctrine of a natural conscience and the arguments for the affirmation that conscience is a creature of education are one and the same, and are urged against the existence of a moral nature in any and every phase of it in which it is or has been affirmed.

It is said, if there were any such thing as a natural conscience, then all men would possess it, and all moral decisions would agree; but men differ in their moral judgments and impulses. What one nation considers right another considers wrong; therefore, there is no such thing as natural conscience. We reply, the argument admits that all men make a distinction between right and wrong; therefore, they have the power to do so, and the alleged difference must be accounted for in some other way than by denying the existence of that power. Again, when the ends of action or motives to it are taken into account, the alleged difference disappears. No man ever thought it right to intend an injury, or wrong to intend a kindness. Again, when men perform actions which are manifestly wrong, believing that they are right, they do so for reasons which, if true, would make them right, showing that the difference is in the conditions of the case, and not in the indications of the conscience. Men agree or differ in their decisions of questions of virtue and vice in the same way they agree or differ in their decisions of questions of truth and error. Ask an ancient which of the two moves, the earth or the sun, in the diurnal revolutions, and he would say the sun. Ask a modern the same question, and he would say the earth. One judges in view of appearances, and the other in view of astronomical observations; but let both judge in view of the same things, and their decisions will agree. The fundamental principles of virtue are the same everywhere and always, and not unfrequently they assert themselves against great odds. In spite of prevailing custom, popular opinion, civil enactments, and even religious creeds and ceremonies, men and women have maintained their convictions of duty unto the death, and martyrdoms are suffered, usually in defense of the right.

Again: it is said, in opposition to the doctrine of natural conscience, that men violate every obligation of virtue without remorse. To this we reply, If such a monster could be found, who could remorselessly violate every obligation, his existence would no more prove that man is not amoral being than the existence of idiots and insane persons prove that man is not a rational being. That men of apparently average character do sometimes without remorse violate some of the obligations of virtue proves defectiveness of conscience, but not its non- existence. All men whose character is worthy to be considered as exponential of human

nature do respect some virtues, detest some vices; do approve in themselves and others the practice of some of the virtues, and condemn themselves and censure others for the practice of some of the vices. They have a conscience, though it may be defective.

Again: it is claimed that the existence of a natural conscience is useless, since all we have to do is to violate it as we please, and then stiffer its penalties. This objection supposes that the utility of conscience depends upon its being compulsory, when it is manifest that freedom is one of the essential conditions of its existence.

That conscience is not a creature of education, we aver, is evident from what we affirm to be fact; namely, it is not conceivable that a human being can be so educated as that he would approve himself, and think that he deserved the approval of others, for intending to do his neighbor an injury; nor could he be so educated as to be made to believe that he deserved the censure of himself and others for intending a kindness. The fact is that, in all these cases of difference in moral judgments and practices, education has to do with the making up of the case, with the intellectual apprehensions of the conditions of the case. The sources of information being different, the information itself is different, and the judgments are judgments of different cases. Moreover, in most, if not in all, cases where the moral judgment is an approval of an immoral act, the evil is so coupled with the good as to make out a case of an overbalance of good, and the approval is based on that surplusage of supposed good; the means employed and approved are, in the decisions of the intellect, necessary for the good sought, and it is the security of that good that constitutes the basis of the approval. If, therefore, there be any cases in which anything but the good obligates the conscience, the case is abnormal, exceptional, and not at all determinative of what is man's normal nature.

## 4. AUTHORITY OF CONSCIENCE.

Is it asked whether conscience be infallible, so that if a man be strictly conscientious, and always obeys the dictates of his conscience he will

invariably do right? the answer is an emphatic *no*. On this there is no dispute; all concede that a man may be, and that all men at some time are, conscientious in error, and as a consequence do with self-approval what ought not to be done. Even Paul, the great and good, a model of conscientiousness, said of himself one occasion, "I know nothing of myself, yet am I not thereby justified: it is God that judgeth." That is, he was conscientious, he was self-approved; but that did not prove that his conduct fulfilled the law of abstract righteousness—God only could know that.

Is it asked, Is a man obligated always to obey his conscience? ought he to do invariably what his conscience dictates? the answer is a most emphatic *yes*.

For what is conscience? what is it that a man does when he obeys his conscience? Plainly, he does what he thinks and feels it his duty to do. What else can he do, and be approved either by himself or others, than to do what his judgment tells him he ought to do, and what his sense of obligation prompts him to do? But it is said his knowledge of the facts in a given case may be imperfect, incomplete; his judgment may be perverted, biased by the prejudices of education, so that he thinks it his duty to do what, were he better informed, were he free from prejudice, he would clearly see he ought not to do. Conscience prompts him to do what is in violation of the law of righteousness; must he do it? Most certainly. Of course his antecedent obligations bound him to inform himself to the extent of his ability and opportunity, and also to educate his conscience to the same extent. If he has neglected to do so, his sin lies at the door of that antecedent neglect.

But now, whether by a rigid self-education his conscience is quick as the apple of an eye, and his intellect be fully informed of all the facts and principles involved in the case; or whether by past neglect his conscience is seared, his judgment perverted, and his intelligence ill-informed,—in either case, and in all cases, he has nothing left but to follow the best judgment he has, and do as he now feels he ought to do.

Whatever be the end of human existence, whether it be holiness or happiness, or both; whatever be the ground of moral obligation, whether

the right or the good, or both,—that end will be better secured by obedience to conscience than by obedience to any other impulse. Suppose happiness the end of being. Now, if a man follow appetite, his pleasure terminates with the gratifications of the present moment; if he follow self-love, his good terminates on himself; but if he follow conscience he secures all the good there is in the gratification of appetite, all there is in the ends of self-love, with the added pleasures of virtue, the blessedness of a mind conscious to itself of right. Suppose holiness the end of being, what higher idea of holiness in imperfect beings can there be than undeviating obedience to moral obligation in the highest sense the agent is capable of conceiving that obligation, or, in other words, obedience to the present dictates of conscience?

Does anyone say authority is man's guide—that especially the uninformed are to do as instructed by their teachers? we reply, There is no infallible pope, there are no infallible teachers, upon whom to rely; and man cannot so easily shift from himself his moral responsibilities. Instruction is to be sought, and the services of teachers secured, as means of qualifying ourselves to judge for ourselves. Does anyone say the Bible is man's guide? I answer as before. The Bible is an instrument of instruction and education; by it the good man is furnished unto every good work, because it qualifies him to judge correctly what is duty and what is sin.

But someone will ask, Suppose a strictly conscientious person, one who has faithfully employed all the means of moral and religious instruction providentially within his reach, should have a religious conviction of duty to do a wrong thing—as, for example, a Hindoo mother religiously impressed that it is her duty to sacrifice her child by throwing it in the Ganges to be devoured by crocodiles—is that person a sinner, guilty of disobedience to God, if he refuse? We answer, first, it may be doubted whether the case is supposable; it is doubtful whether God will permit a strictly conscientious person to be so deceived. But, secondly, suppose the case possible and actual, we answer, first, it may be doubted whether a person so deceived is morally responsible, so that whether he obey or refuse there is no moral character attached to his conduct; and, secondly, if he be morally responsible he must obey his conscience or he is guilty. If the Hindoo mother refuse, for the gratification of maternal affection, to obey her convictions of duty to God, she is guilty. We must say this, or we

must say that Abraham was in heart guilty of murder when he purposed and prepared to sacrifice Isaac in obedience to what he believed to be a command of God.

# CHAPTER 3: VIRTUE.

WE have seen that the terms virtue and vice, holiness and sin, righteousness and unrighteousness are employed in two general senses; one applied to conduct and the other to character. We speak of virtuous and vicious, holy and sinful, righteous and unrighteous acts, and we also apply, these qualifying terms to the word person or persons. We have also seen that in all questions of moral science we have to do with the former, since all obligation and responsibility relate primarily to actions. Man is responsible for what he does and not for what he is, any further than his character is the result of his own voluntary action; and, in this case, the responsibility rests upon those antecedent acts which caused his character to be what it is.

We have also seen that the actions which involve moral responsibility are acts of an intelligent. sentient being endowed with free will, and that they are always *acts of choice*.

We come now to inquire as to the nature of virtue, which is the same as to inquire, What is the distinguishing characteristic of those acts of choice which obligate the conscience; which ought to be, which are right or righteous, good or holy? Here the old metaphysical speculations, discussions, and controversies respecting the ground of obligation come in to trouble us, and they make difficult and obscure what it would seem ought to be the plainest of all moral questions; but these deep waters are now before us, and we have nothing else to do but plunge in, wade or swim if we can, down if we must.

If the ground of obligation be the declared will of God, then virtue is obedience to God's will—it is volitionating to do, and doing what God has commanded. If the ground of obligation be an eternal principle of right, then virtue is choosing and doing in accordance with that principle. If there be an eternal fitness of things, and obligation naturally and necessarily arises out of the relations intelligent and sentient beings sustain to each other, then virtue is choosing and doing in accordance with those relations or choosing and doing what those relations

intuitively indicate ought to be done.

## **1. RIGHT AND WRONG— INNOCENCE AND GUILT.**

If either of the above theories be adopted, then a distinction between wrong and guilt is to be made. Right and virtue would be synonymous terms in the sense of the definitions of virtue given above, and would apply solely to the acts of choosing and doing, abstractly considered. The same would be true of vice and wrong; but the terms innocence and guilt would signify what may be predicated of the agent, and would depend upon the agent's intentions, so that a man might do a right act and still be a guilty person, as in the case of the unjust judge; he avenged the widow which was an act corresponding with his relations to her, a thing he ought to do, and in that sense a right act; but he did it from a selfish motive, he did it to avoid the annoyance of her persistent importunities. But it may be said the judge did not do the act commanded, for he was commanded to avenge the oppressed with proper motives.

This vitiates the definitions and makes the end proposed apart of the act. It is quite clear that many actions have no moral character; at least quite clear that the external act, considered apart from the intentions of the agent, has none. The giving of money by one person to another, considered in itself, is morally nothing; if, however, it be in payment of an honest debt, it is an act of justice; if as a donation to the deserving poor, an act of charity; if it be the wages of a ruffian to secure the death of an enemy, it is an act of murder; if to secure the destruction of one's country, it is an act of treason. Plainly, the moral quality of the act here depends upon the intentions of the agent. Is it always so? You may say it is always right for man to wish well to his neighbor; but, we ask, is it virtuous when he indulges good will, really chooses, desires that his neighbor may prosper, and does so for a selfish purpose, as when he does so that his neighbor may be able to confer favors upon him? If you say no, I see not to the contrary but that the controversy is ended, and it is conceded that the moral quality of an action depends upon the choice of an end *for its*

*own sake.* Virtue, then, involves the choosing of a good that is a good in itself, good for nothing beyond itself; there is no such thing as a virtuous act performed with a vicious motive; no such thing as a man's doing a right act and being a guilty person.

When a murderer, intending to take your life, plunges a dagger into your person, and by chance opens an abscess, and thus saves your life, he does a good thing with a murderous intent; but it is not morally good in any sense whatever. Dr. Wayland says "The moral quality of the action resides in the intention;" and again he says, "Right and wrong depend upon the relations under which beings are created, and hence the obligations resulting from these relations are, in their nature, fixed and unchangeable. Guilt and innocence depend upon the knowledge of these relations, and of the obligations arising from them. As these are manifestly susceptible of variation, while right and wrong are invariable, the two notions may manifestly not always correspond to each other. A man may do what is actually right, but without a desire to fulfill the obligation of which he is conscious he is held to be guilty." Is this scientifically correct? is that which a man does without a desire to fulfill his obligations "actually right?" does not the agent's desire and intent enter as an integral part of every moral act? A man may do what accords with his relations, what is productive of good, and so far forth his act may be a good thing; but is it morally good when his motives are vicious or defective? Again, the doctor says, "An action may be wrong, but if the agent have no means of knowing it to be wrong, he is held morally guiltless in the doing of it; if he have acted according to the best of his possible knowledge he may not only be held guiltless, but even virtuous." Is this so?

does not his ignorance enter as apart of his act, and so remove his act entirely from the field of morals? Is an act done in ignorance either right or wrong, morally considered? It may be beneficial or injurious, but cannot be properly said to be virtuous or vicious? All moral acts, then, are either blame or praise worthy; have merit or demerit; are to be approved or condemned. A man can not do what may properly be called a virtuous act, and in respect to that act be a guilty person. In like manner, he cannot do a vicious act, and be virtuous or innocent.

## 2. THEORY.

The conditions of a moral act are, power, intelligence, freedom, and obligation. A moral agent must be one who is endowed with causative power, ability to bring something to pass. He must have intelligence, ability to comprehend the end proposed, and the means adapted to accomplish the end. He must be free, both to and from the act to be performed; have power to volitionate the act or its contrary. And he must be conscious of obligation; must know—and, knowing, will of necessity feel—he ought to do the thing proposed. In this we are speaking of the act done considered as a whole; the deed done, including the external muscular act, as well as the internal volition in choice and action.

The morality of the act is found wholly in the choice, and the objects of choice in all moral acts are the ends to be secured or promoted by the act to be done; that is to say, the choice which determines whether the act be a virtue or a crime is not the choice between doing the external act and not doing it, but it is the choice between the motives in view of which the agent makes his choice. The choice of motives and the purpose to execute the deed are not distinguishable. They are contemporary, and substantially, in consciousness, one and the same. They determine the executive issues and the external act. If the determining choice be a virtue it is a choice of that which obligates the conscience, that end or good which constitutes the ground of obligation.

From the above it is evident that the pivotal question in this whole discussion is, briefly, What is the thing chosen when an act of choice is itself a virtue? But before discussing this question further it may be well to inquire, Is there anyone act of choice that is not only itself a virtue, but is so related to all that is virtuous in the character and conduct of the agent as that it is determinative of the whole question of obligation and responsibility? If conversion be instantaneous, if under grace a man may by one single act translate himself from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son, if by a single act a man changes himself from a rebellious transgressor to an obedient servant, then this question is answered affirmatively. We leave the provisions of grace, all that is

supernatural, for the present, out of the question, and looking solely at what is natural and philosophic, we shall attempt to answer both questions at once. Suppose one engaged in any employment you may please to choose, say a student in any definite course of study; suppose the usual college curriculum. What motive prompts his industry and diligence? The motive proximate to his activities may be obedience to the requirements of his parents and teachers. Obedience may have been chosen; because he recognized the right his parents and teachers had to command, and he acknowledged that right as founded upon their ability to do him good, and their disposition to require nothing but what is for his good. But the good of one is subordinate to the good of the many. Here we have reached the ultimate in this line of thought. The highest good of all is ultimate; all below is subordinate. The proximate motive may have been to qualify himself the better for his after-life. But he seeks higher qualifications that his future labors may be more abundant and more efficient; and this that he may have the more extensive patronage and a larger remuneration in wealth, honor, social position, and other advantages in life.

But still he seeks these that he and those dependent upon him may be happier, may enjoy higher satisfaction. The good of the few is less than the good of all. Now, here again we have reached the ultimate motive; all below is subordinate. But we can find nothing higher, nothing back of the good of all, to which *it* is subordinate; it is ultimate. In like manner, whatever be the business of life, whatever be the motive proximate to the activity, in every case there may be an end beyond any given end till we come to the highest good. All below is good for that above; but this good is good in itself, and no answer can be given to the question, Why is it good?

Now, it is evident a man may even say to evil, Be thou my good; or, what is more likely to occur, he may make any subordinate his chief and ultimate end. But if any subordinate end be chosen as supreme, or any desire for a good to be gratified beyond the limits within which it contributes to that which is higher, obligation is violated. Food may be desired, sought after, obtained, and appropriated, so far as it contributes to the health of body and mind; but when used to the detriment of what is higher than the gratification of appetite this is sin.

We see, then, that to choose the highest good of all, to make the greatest good one's supreme end, one's governing motive in all of life's actions, is itself a virtue, is that in which a virtuous character consists, and so controls all subordinate actions as to make them virtuous. If a man's supreme end be wealth, he is avaricious; if power, ambitious; if pleasure, sensual; if his own good, exclusive of the good of others, selfish; if the good of all sentient being, himself included, moral, benevolent, pious.

The action of the will by which a supreme end is chosen is sometimes called "the immanent preference"—in this view it is regarded somewhat as a permanent habit of mind. It may be, in its beginning, a single, distinctly cognized, instantaneous act; or it may be attained by a gradual process, may be approached and reached by a succession of choices. Theology teaches that it is not possible in any case except under grace; that the power of will to volitionate such a choice is a gracious bestowment; and that the supernatural influences by which it becomes a possibility are exerted in aid of the educational instrumentalities which the agent employs for that purpose.

Subordinate ends are, in reference to ends subordinate to themselves, sometimes called governing motives. Thus a student, pursuing a college course may lay aside his studies for a time and go into business for the acquisition of means to further prosecute his studies: in such a case education is a governing motive and money the subordinate. The choice of a certain class of motives is with reference to a governing motive called a desultory volition.

Thus, a man forms a purpose to journey to a given city; on his way, without relinquishing his purpose, he turns aside from the direct road thither and ascends some eminence to gain an extended prospect of the surrounding country.

To reach the city is a governing motive, his decision to ascend the mountain is a desultory volition.

Whatever be the relation of motives among themselves all are morally characterized by the supreme motive, that which to the man is ultimate, and which he prefers to any other and to all others.

### **3. OBJECTIONS.**

The affirmation that the above is a utilitarian, a selfish system, has been sufficiently answered in preceding pages. Perhaps, also, enough has been said of the affirmation that "the right" and not "the good" is ultimate, and in all virtuous acts supreme; any way, we are content to leave this theory by simply repeating, in substance, what has been before said; namely, that if we may have an idea of an abstract eternal right, we may also have an idea of an abstract eternal good. There may be an abstract eternal happiness as well as an abstract eternal holiness; of either we know but little, and can neither affirm nor deny any thing very positively. Whether one or the other be primary, and if so, which, is not obvious; for aught we can know to the contrary, they are co-ordinate. When of any definite act, purpose, character, or disposition it may be affirmed that it is right, reason may be assigned why it is so; but of the supreme good conceived as actual, not abstract and eternal, but as actually existent in time, no reason can be assigned why it is good. Here, then, is an end conceived as actual which is ultimate; no other such end is known or conceivable, and in this fact is found a reason for regarding it as the only end which may practically be made supreme. To the objection that virtue does not consist in acts of choice, but in character, we reply, character, so far as responsibility extends, is the creature of acts of choice.

It is objected, again, that the theory does not admit of degrees in virtue. It is said a man does or he does not choose the supreme good; if he does, he can do no more, and is therefore perfectly virtuous; if he does not, he can do no less, and is therefore perfectly vicious. This objection in view of what is obvious in religion, deserves notice and reply.

### **4. OF VIRTUE IN IMPERFECT BEINGS.**

The objection above stated is made chiefly in the interests of religion; but

that its force is more in appearance than in reality is obvious from the fact that religion, especially the Christian religion, more distinctly draws a line between the righteous and the wicked than is or can be drawn in ethics.

Whether a man be far off by wicked works, a stranger and an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, or be not far from the kingdom of God, he is not in the kingdom; and if one be in the kingdom, whether a new-born babe, or one having attained the fullness of the stature of Christ, he is a child of God and an heir of heaven. In the light of religion, then, a man is or he is not a Christian; and no interest of religion is periled by saying in ethics a man does or does not make choice of the supreme good, and that his moral character is determined thereby; that he is a virtuous man if he chooses the good, and a vicious man if he refuse or neglect to do so.

That a man may do his best, and yet that best be vastly inferior in itself in all its characteristics and in all of its consequent results to what another man may do, and to what he himself at another time, and in other conditions, and under other circumstances may do, is too obvious to admit of discussion; and this obvious truth does not at all conflict with the idea that his then best act may be determinative of all that follows it, may be a transition from the past to the future, a crisis in his history decisive of all his moral relations.

It remains only to state in what respect virtue may be imperfect—and, after the above discussion, we judge this need require but few words.

First, the discriminating faculty may fail to perform its functions perfectly for several reasons—the facts involved in a question of conscience may not all be known, and known facts may be incorrectly interpreted; the case as presented may fail to affect the sensibility so as to awaken a proper apprehension of the good involved; the moral intuition may be feeble, so that the sense of obligation is different from what the truth in the case would require. The discriminations may be so at fault that the man may feel himself obligated to the opposite of what a perfect conscience would indicate ought to be done.

Secondly, of course when the discrimination is at fault the impulse is towards the erroneous or defective; but even in cases where the moral

judgment is in accordance with truth the sensibility may be so enfeebled that the impulse, the sense of duty, is in no sense commensurate with the interests involved.

Thirdly, when the intellect and sensibility make untruthful presentations to the will, its decisions are likely to be the contrary of what a perfect moral constitution would require, and when these presentations are what they should be, the will, from a constitutional perverseness or an habitual indecision, may fail to volition ate the choice that ought to be made.

The Bible doctrine of natural depravity is an affirmation that this is the moral condition of all men destitute of grace, and it is the opinion of most, if not all, theologians that even under the provisions of grace no man is so perfectly saved be able to maintain a uniform practice of virtue that is absolutely perfect; and the facts of human history abundantly confirm this opinion. All human virtue is imperfect—imperfect not only from the necessary limitations of a finite being, but also if from positive defects in man's moral constitution. Man is virtuous relatively, not absolutely.

We say, then, whoever has a purpose of righteousness, an immanent preference, accordant with the best light he has and correspondent with his moral nature as it is, is virtuous in the highest sense of which he is capable in his then existing character, condition, and circumstances.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEFECTS IN VIRTUE.**

Salvation from the natural results of defects in virtue and from the judicial results, if there be any, is possible only under the provisions of grace. For these mere philosophy has n~ remedy; escape, if possible at all, must be by redemption, the same as in case of pardon for actual transgressions of known and acknowledged law. But the question is asked, Is not a man responsible and punishable for his failures to fulfill the law of absolute righteousness? It is said the law is immutable, it cannot lower its claims to meet the exigencies of its subjects. We answer,

the law is immutable, in that it invariably requires what is just and equal; but it does not invariably require the same specific act. Again, it is said, much of man's inability to keep the law is self-imposed, it is the consequence of his past neglect, his past sins, and he is responsible for all the consequences of his sins. We reply, his responsibility to the full extent that he is responsible rests upon his past sins and not upon his present inabilities, and that responsibility extends not to all the consequences thereof, but only to those which he was reasonably able to anticipate.

# CHAPTER 4: MORAL CULTURE.

MUCH that may be said on the nature and means of moral culture belongs properly to practical rather than theoretical ethics; but much also belongs as well to the latter, and consecutive thought requires that this be discussed in the present connection.

We have insisted that man is by nature a moral being, that by creation he has a moral nature. We come now to remark that this moral nature is such as requires development by educational processes; as much so and in the same way, as man's physical and intellectual natures require educational processes for their development.

## 1. METHOD.

It is a general law of man's nature, applicable equally to the physical, the intellectual, and the moral, that our faculties are developed, strengthened, and in every way improved by proper use. The exercise of any faculty accordant with the nature and laws of that faculty will increase its power, and carry it, forward towards maturity and perfection. The abuse or disuse of any faculty tends to weaken its power and vitiate its action.

The discriminating faculty will thus be improved by the habit of inquiring, in reference to every proposed enterprise or action, What good will come of it? is it right? are there any moral obligations involved? The avaricious man habitually inquires, What profit? what the prospect of gain?

The ambitious man seeks to know what increase of popularity or power; the sensualist, what pleasure is promised; but the virtuous man inquires chiefly, and makes all other inquiries subordinate to this, What moral advantage? what good is there in this case? He acquires this habit by practice; and the practice, whether induced by the mandates of will or by the influence of habit, corrects, quickens, and strengthens his ability to

distinguish between the good and the evil, between the right and the wrong. Thereby the intellect acquires facility in apprehending and interpreting facts, the judgment gains power to make correct decisions, the sensibility becomes more intensely sensitive and more readily recognizes the good, the moral intuition more promptly and more efficiently cognizes the obligation. In like manner the impulsive power of conscience is quickened, becomes capable of, and gives forth, stronger impulses.

But nowhere does culture evince itself more manifestly than in the volitionating faculty. Strength of will, promptly, emphatically, and decisively to say to temptation *no*, is an endowment of but very few; if any.

This power is usually acquired, if ever possessed, by long continued practice.

He who would always choose the good and refuse the evil must, even under the provisions of grace, diligently and vigilantly use his will-power in the interests of virtue. The law that our faculties are strengthened by use and weakened by disuse or abuse applies equally to the retributive power of conscience.

## 2. MEANS.

The building up of our nature into maturity and perfection is our sole earthly business; all below the moral nature is tributary to it, and culminates in it. It may therefore be said that the formation of a perfect moral character in ourselves and others is the end of our earthly existence.

This being so, it were natural to expect, and we here affirm it to be a fact, that everything with which we have to do should be so related to us as to be means of moral culture. Ourselves, our experiences, our surroundings, our fellow-men, the earth at our feet and the heavens above, the food we eat, the books, we read, the conversations we have with acquaintances, friends, and neighbors, all that pertains to us, may be, and ought to be,

put under contribution for moral purposes. Whatever we do, whether we eat or drink, we are to do with a single eye to the glory of God; that is, with the single and definite purpose of making the best of being for ourselves and others.

A catalogue of the means of culture and the best method of use in each, of course, cannot be given. They may be, and are, usefully classified as *nature, providence, and revelation*.

First, nature, which may here be made to include all actually existing beings and things of which we have any knowledge. Among these, first, most prominent, and most important, is human nature—ourselves and our fellow-men.

What are we? of what composed? how constituted? what the laws of our being?

wherein is our chief interest? what is for the good of ourselves and others?

The man who would understand ethics must know psychology. By a most thorough introspection and self-examination he must know himself, and by extensive observation he must find out what is in others. "*Know thyself*" is a maxim of great wisdom, not only for the purposes of general science, but also especially so for ethical purposes. Not only is mental science a means of moral culture, but also natural science, as well. We may learn man's duty and destiny not only from the study of mind, but also from the study of matter. The mere naturalist studies nature merely to ascertain the facts and second causes of things as he finds them, but the student of ethics looks for first cause and intentional design; "looks through nature up to nature's God," that he may find out what is the will of God and the good of his creatures. In all his searchings he inquires, "Who will show me any good?"

Second, providence, which may here include all events or occurrences, whatever takes place. These are all under benevolent and wise control, whatsoever comes to pass is either by the agency or permission of him whose will is, that he and all the creatures he has made should perpetually and forever enjoy the highest possible good. The mere

historian studies events to ascertain the facts and the immediate connections; but the ethical student seeks to find God in history. He inquires, in all events, what does God design, intend, purpose by this? for what good end did he bring this to pass, or permit it to be? But the defects in man's moral constitution, and the derangements in his surroundings, are such that mere natural means are inadequate for moral instruction, of which we shall speak in the next chapter.

Hence the need of, the necessity for, a direct revelation in words from the Author of all.

Nature and providence failing as adequate means of moral culture, revelation comes in to complete and perfect the trinity of instructors. And here, as nowhere else, the man of God, the man seeking moral perfection, is thoroughly furnished unto every Good work.

# **CHAPTER 5: DEFECTS IN NATURAL RELIGION.**

## **1. DEFECTS IN NATURAL CONSCIENCE.**

WERE man's moral nature perfect, were all its powers in perfect adjustment each to the other, and all to all existences, yet coming into being as we do in infancy under the law of development by education, it is manifest that without instruction perfection in maturity were unattainable; and even suppose man were created in maturity, as we know by revelation the first man was created, yet it is not apparent that he could secure the end of his being without positive instruction from his creator; nay more, we may positively affirm that the attainment of his highest possibility was impossible without such instruction. Accordingly, we find that God gave him a commandment uttered in words, in a matter in which the will of God could be known in no other way. Natural conscience, however pure and perfect, could never indicate that the fruit of any particular tree was forbidden, and so also of all positive precepts. Man, then, in any condition of his being conceivable, being what he is, needs a revelation of his Maker's will. But if a revelation be needful for the maturity and highest possibility of a perfect nature, how much more is it needful for a nature fallen from original righteousness—

diseased, deranged, depraved!

That man is not, by nature, in a condition of perfection, is too obvious for philosophical discussion. That he is not as he was, by creation, has fallen from primal perfection, is in a lapsed and diseased condition, is an affirmation in anthropology, and the discussion belongs to that department of systematic theology. If the reader, at this point, desires to examine the arguments usually adduced in confirmation of the Bible

doctrine of natural depravity, he is referred to the second volume of this work, pages 89-106.

The deficiencies of natural conscience may be illustrated by numerous examples—instance in the case of parents; natural conscience might indicate the obligation to educate their children, but could give no information as to the best methods of discharging that obligation. Again, natural conscience might obligate us to love our friends, but, to say the least, it is doubtful whether it would ever suggest an obligation to love our enemies. Whether monogamy is obligatory or polygamy allowable, whether the marriage contract is for life or dissoluble at the will of the parties, is not decisively determined by the indications of an uninstructed conscience.

## **2. DEFECTS IN THEISTIC METHODS.**

Additional to the dictates of natural conscience the divine will as to man's duty and destiny is indicated in part by the established order of things by the connection between cause and effect, antecedent and consequent. When any course of conduct is found by experience to be beneficial, productive of good, it is inferred from thence that that course of conduct is in accordance with the will of God, is man's duty. On the contrary, any course of conduct found to be injurious, productive of evil, is regarded as contrary to the divine will, forbidden, sinful. This is reasonable, accords with the dictates of natural conscience, and is in harmony with the philosophy of the case. Any good is an end, the highest good of all an ultimate, and ought to be every man's supreme end; whatever, therefore, is promotive of a proper end, whatever will secure a good, is right, and its opposite wrong. Thus, by observing the effects produced upon individuals and upon society by different courses of conduct, virtues and vices may be discovered. The only objection to this is found in the well known fact that some courses of action are such that though their immediate results are pleasant, and may be deemed to be profitable, they are afterwards found to bite like a serpent and sting like an adder; and other sources of

conduct produce results which, though for the present grievous, afterwards work the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It is not true that all pleasures are allowable, nor are all pains c prohibitory. This, however, is no objection to the doctrine that duty may be learned by observing the results of conduct. The fact stated is nothing more than an apparent exception, and hardly that, to the universal law that virtue and happiness, vice and misery are inseparably united. That we are able to show so distinctly that some pleasures are not allowable, and that some pains are not prohibitory, vitiates the objection and shows plainly that this method of learning duty, so far as it goes, is reliable.

But that this way of learning duty, valuable as it is, is not adequate for all the purposes of morals and religion is abundantly evident. The fact, just above stated, has force in this direction. Though not an objection to the law itself, it constitutes a difficulty in ascertaining the law, and so far forth demonstrates that this method of learning our duty is defective and inadequate.

Again, in many things done under the sun, the effect is so far distant from the cause that human wisdom is incompetent to anticipate what the effect will be; and when the result takes place, the connection between the cause and the effect is not discoverable by any investigation possible to man.

Again, this is a method of experiment. We must transgress the law to know that it is a law; we must sin to know that it is sin. Thereby we contract a habit of sinning, and fall in love with sin itself; a condition of things which, is an evil for which, natural religion provides no preventive and no remedy.

Again, the facts in nature and providence have been in the world from the beginning, but many as competent as any to interpret them have failed to do so; so that in many nations, for long periods of time, natural religion has done nothing appreciable in diminishing the prevalence of sin or in checking sin's destructive agency and power.

The argument for the necessity of a revelation drawn from the defects of natural religion is obvious to any intelligent thinker, and therefore need not be here drawn out at greater length than it is in the above brief

statements.

Indeed, Dr. Paley says, "I deem it unnecessary to prove that mankind stood in need of a revelation, because I have met with no serious person who thinks that even under the Christian revelation we have too much light or any degree of assurance which is superfluous." Dr. Chalmers, on the same subject, says, in substance, that having at command adequate evidence that a revelation has actually been given us, it is not requisite that we suspend the examination of this evidence to inquire into the antecedent probability that a revelation would be given.

But rationalists and theists of all ages have insisted that it is antecedently so improbable that such a being as God is should communicate in words with such a being as man is, that no amount of evidence possible in the case can make a revelation probable; and further, that this antecedent improbability is rendered more apparent by the fact that God's will and man's duty are sufficiently indicated in the teachings of nature and providence.

This objection to revealed religion is considered at length in this work under the head of "Apologetics," Volume I, Chapter 1, wherein it is fully shown, as we think, not only that a revelation is not antecedently improbable, but also that it is so eminently probable that its probability constitutes a strong presumptive argument that a revelation has actually been given.

For the evidences of Christianity, proofs that the Christian Scriptures are a revelation from God—that what the Bible says, God says—the reader is referred to the whole of Book First of this work.

# CHAPTER 6: THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

WE here assume that the evidences of Christianity constitute a conclusive argument, and adequately prove that the Bible is given by divine inspiration, that it is a complete and perfect rule of faith and practice, that by it the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work; that they, "the Holy Scriptures, contain all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation;" that "in the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church;" that "the Old Testament is not contrary to the New;" that "although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral."

The superiority of the Christian ethics above all others is in no respect more obvious than in their perspicuity. Duty is in the Scriptures made so plain that he that runneth may read; the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err. We know the opposite is boldly affirmed, and it is even claimed that what obviously ought not to be is in the Bible approved of God. This may be fairly met with a flat denial. The examples adduced do not make out the case; for they are either a mere record of historic facts, recorded without indorsement, or special commands given definite persons, with a clear intimation that they are not designed for general practice. No father ever thought himself commanded of God to sacrifice his son because Abraham was. No king or warrior ever thought himself authorized to exterminate a nation because Joshua was commanded to exterminate the Canaanites. The alleged Bible indorsements of war, slavery, polygamy, and divorce, in the light of intelligent interpretation,

give no encouragement to those practices, and never in any sense authorize them as Christian institutions.

Plainly, no reader of the Bible will ever feel bound by its authority to the performance of any act unless it be distinctly made known that that act is commanded on divine authority, and that he is the person to whom the command is given. This will exclude all mere history, and all precepts or commands given to particular individuals or to particular nations; it will include all commandments given to man as man, and whatever is plainly indicated as of universal obligation. Thus the civil institutions and the ceremonial law of the Jewish polity were binding upon the Jews only, and are not at all binding upon Christians; but the moral law is as binding upon all men as upon the Jews, is universally applicable, and universally obligatory.

We have thus passed over the leading topics usually discussed under the head of Theoretical Ethics. We have treated them briefly, but still as extensively as to our thought is requisite in a primary text-book. We conclude this First Part with a few observations on the utility of such discussions, or the value of Theoretical Ethics. We do so because some theologians have averred that discussions of this kind disparaged the Scriptures, though we see not why any theologian, especially, should say as much.

If there be any philosophy in morals, certainly the student in theology, especially, ought to know, it; if there is not, it will be of special advantage to him to be assured of that fact.

The book of nature and the book of providence are divine; and so far forth as they indicate the divine will they are of divine authority. Man lives by "*every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Nature speaks to us with a commanding eloquence concerning both our duties and our destiny; what fanaticism must that be which charges with impiety him who listens to her voices!

When we consult psychology to find man's moral nature and the ground of obligation, the same thing is done that the theologian does when he consults natural science to find marks of intelligent design, and thus proofs of the divine existence. Who ever thought that this was impiety, or

a disparagement of revelation? The evidences of a revelation demonstrate the being of God; if he has revealed himself to us of course he is, and the Bible everywhere assumes his existence; is it therefore a disparagement that we seek confirmation in natural science? Certainly not; and no more is it a disparagement of theology that we should seek confirmation in psychological investigations for what is assumed in the Bible respecting man; namely, that he is by creation a moral being, is created under law, is a law to himself, that obligation and responsibility are revealed in the necessary laws of thought.

In all questions of practical morality, for the Christian believer, the ultimate standard, the decisive authority, is the law and the testimony; with him discussion ceases when the revealed word has uttered a determining voice; but to the intelligent believer it need not diminish his reverence for the Bible, nor his appreciation of its value, nor his sense of man's need of such a revelation, to find that its declarations are confirmed by the constitution and laws of the human mind, and by the constitution and order of things in the world around us.

In what follows we propose to refer chiefly to the revealed Word of God for our information on questions of duty, and to it solely as of decisive authority; but we shall not refuse or neglect to notice such considerations drawn from the constitution and laws of being as to us may seem serviceable for purposes of illustration or confirmation.

## **PART 2: PRACTICAL ETHICS.**

# CHAPTER 7: CLASSIFICATION.

ALL our duties have immediate reference either to ourselves, to our fellow-men, or to God. If, therefore, we classify them thus: 1. Our duties to ourselves, or self-culture; 2. Our duties to our fellow-men, or morality; and 3. Our duties to God, or piety—we should construct an exhaustive category.

But this would not be a logical division, since each class might include the other two. For, evidently, self-interest requires that we do our whole duty; not only those having immediate reference to self but also those due both to others and to God; and as it is our duty to promote the highest good of our fellow-men according to our ability and opportunity, and as we are qualified to do this the better by a faithful discharge of duty to ourselves and to God it is evident that the obligations of morality might indirectly at least include all others; and so also of piety, for we owe it to God that we be faithful to ourselves and to our fellow-men.

Further, if the classification of duties be based on priority of time, the order would be as above; but if on priority or importance, the order would be reversed, and it would stand thus: 1. piety; 2. morality; and 3. self-culture. If the law of the conditioned and conditioning be adopted as the basis of classification; that is, if that which is a condition of others be placed first, and that which is conditioned follow, then the order first named would be the one required.

If we make the proximate end of each duty the basis of classification, then the above, in the order named, would be well-nigh both an exhaustive category and a logical division. Since this is as common and as serviceable as any we know of, so far forth as we attempt classification, we shall follow it.

The duties of self-culture imply, as prerequisites the security of our rights and the supply of our wants, and may be subdivided into those appertaining to, 1. our physical; 2. our intellectual; 3. our aesthetic; and 4. our moral natures.

The duties of morality may be subdivided into duties: 1. of reciprocity; 2. of benevolence; and, again, into duties domestic, social, civil, and ecclesiastical—those pertaining to the family, to general society, to the State, and to the Church.

Dr. Wayland makes a very natural and scientific classification of the duties of reciprocity, thus: 1. "Duties to men as men; 2. Duties arising from the constitution of the sexes; 3. Duties arising from the constitution of civil society. Duties to men as men, include: 1. Justice as it regards, (1) Liberty, (2) Property, (3) Character, and (4) Reputation. 2. Veracity, (1) as to the past and present, (2) as to the future. Duties arising from the constitution of the sexes include, 1. The general duty of chastity. 2. The law of marriage. 3. Duties and rights of parents. 4. Duties and rights of children. Duties arising from the constitution of civil society include duties, 1. Of magistrates. 2. Of citizens. Duties of benevolence refer, 1. To the unhappy; 2. To the wicked; and 3. To the injurious."

# CHAPTER 8: SELF-CULTURE.

THIS topic is too commonplace for extended discussion in such a place as this, and yet, like all common, necessary things, too important to admit of omission.

To supply our wants, by labor, economy, and frugality, is made our duty by the condition of our being. In man's primal condition of innocence, purity, and perfection, he was required to dress and keep the garden. After his transgression more arduous labors were imposed. To remind him of his sin and of his Maker's displeasure, and to discipline him towards recovery, he was appointed to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. Without labor, development of our powers in any direction is impossible; if all men were idle the race would become extinct in a single age; somebody must work, or death by exposure and starvation is inevitable. Idleness is, therefore, a sin against self, as well as against others and God. It is one of the many lamentable evidences of natural depravity that the moral obligation to be industrious, economical, and frugal is so feebly appreciated, especially so that in any condition of life, among any class of people, labor should be a reproach. He who condemns to degradation the honest laborer, because he is a laborer, sins against himself, against humanity, and against God.

As a necessary prerequisite to self-culture, we are not only to supply those wants needful for the health of body and mind, but also to secure our right to life by self-defense. Self-defense is said to be the first law of nature. We have no more right to allow others to take our life than we have to take it ourselves; we must defend our life, even at the expense, if need be, of taking the life of another.

# EDUCATION.

The nature, methods, and value of education are common topics; but not too common, for their importance cannot be overestimated. The moral

aspects of the subject are too frequently overlooked. That it is man's first and all-important duty to build himself up, to edify himself, to seek the perfection of his powers, is manifest from every consideration by which the question of duty is determined.

## **8.1. PHYSICAL TRAINING.**

This is first as to priority in time, and is the indispensable condition of all other upbuilding. By the proper use of food, clothing, shelter, air, and exercise, within the limits prescribed by the constitution of the physical nature, man is to attain the health, strength, beauty, and grace by which he is to enjoy life himself, and make himself useful in promoting the happiness of others. Without these physical attainments mental and moral acquisitions are many of them impossible, and those attainable, under the embarrassments of impaired physical health, are dwarfed, enfeebled, and every way imperfect.

Man is impelled by the necessities of his nature to pay some attention to these things; and, further, his appetites and desires seek their gratification in this direction. Total neglect is, therefore, next to impossible. The danger is that man, oblivious of his moral obligations in these matters, will make the gratification of appetite and desire his ultimate end, and thus himself become a sensualist. The terribleness of this peril, and the unspeakable calamity of becoming a prey to it, are daily and hourly evinced among mankind by the almost overwhelming floods of intemperance and licentiousness that sweep over the face of society. Diseases, deformities, decrepitudes, enfeeblements, disquietudes, in all their various forms, come many of them from criminal neglect of duty to self. A vivid moral sense of obligation to seek by self-culture the perfection of our physical powers, if observed, would save the world from most of its ills.

Specific rules for diet, dress, habitation, equipage, labor, rest, and whatever pertains proximately to the body, cannot be given; for what is lawful for some is unlawful for others, and what is expedient and proper under some circumstances would be quite inexpedient and improper to the same person under other circumstances.

The moral requirement forbids that in any case the gratification of animal appetites, passions, and desires be made the supreme end of life. Man is never to live for these things; they are to be sought as a means of something above and beyond them. Within this limit they may and ought to be sought—the more diligently and efficiently the better. We may eat, drink, dress, dance, if we like, do anything that pleases us, enjoy any thing that makes us happy; provided, always, by so doing no higher good is periled. Of this every man must be his own judge and keeper; no man need be bound by another man's conscience in these matters. Provided he is in all these things strictly conscientious, and his heart do not condemn him in that thing which he alloweth, he need not be mindful of reproof, no matter whence it comes.

## **8.2. MENTAL DISCIPLINE.**

As the body comes into existence in infantile weakness, so the mind is at first simply an aggregate of susceptibilities and capabilities. All knowledge is dependent upon educational processes. One has facetiously but truthfully said, "No child knows how to take milk with a spoon till he has learned to do so." Knowledge is not inherited. No matter how highly cultured our forefathers or immediate parents, we are born into the world as ignorant as they were at their birth. From generation to generation the same processes for the acquisition of knowledge and the development of mental powers are repeated. In part the necessities of nature impel us, and we instinctively employ the means of mental education. We are led farther by the requirements of parents and teachers, but this avails only for very limited acquisitions.

Without our own voluntary co-operation we remain but slightly removed from infantile ignorance; and, a voluntary neglect continued, we at best are but little better than savages. Parents and teachers may pour in instruction, but without the student's own voluntary efforts his mind will remain a vacuum. If a community of barbarians refuse or neglect to use the means of education their barbarism remains; and if any community, however cultivated, discontinue the use of educational processes they speedily sink down into a state of barbarism.

Thus we are taught, by the constitution of our nature and our relations to our earthly surroundings, the duty of *self-culture as to mind*.

Of *intellectual education* the moralist need say nothing more than to insist that obligation binds the individual and society to seek after, to aim at the highest possibilities, always putting aims, efforts, and attainments under contribution to some end beyond and above mere intellectual good. A student may make his own intellect his god, and worshiping himself sin against himself and his Maker. Alas how many moral monsters have stalked abroad in intellectual greatness! How many giants in logic, in philosophy, in statesmanship, have disgraced humanity with their moral corruptness! The intellectual is above the physical, but it lies below even the sentient and far below the moral. "That the soul be without knowledge is not good." "My people," saith the Lord, "are destroyed for the lack of knowledge." Men are morally obligated by cultivating habits of reading, conversation, and observation to acquire a facility for the acquisition of knowledge, to quicken and strengthen their powers of perception, and thus make themselves familiar with the facts that have to do with their own well-being and that of their fellow-men. Without the power and habit of *reflection* man cannot attain his end; he is, therefore, required to consider his ways, to reason with God, to be thoughtful. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, with all his gettings, man is to get wisdom—the wisdom that comes from abstractions, classifications, reasonings. Sound ethics require the highest, the profoundest philosophy. Correct scholarship, high attainments in science, literature, and art cannot be overestimated as to their value in matters pertaining to duty, well-being, and destiny. Let, then, intellectual culture have its place; a thing to be intensely desired, diligently sought, highly esteemed; let its pursuit obligate the conscience, but never allow it to be an ultimate end—this is selfishness, it is idolatry. When intellectual greatness becomes an ultimate and supreme end, it becomes to him who makes it so a god; and he that worships the creature and not the Creator, thereby destroys every interest involved in human welfare.

*Discipline of the Sensibility.*—The emotions, desires, and affections, as well as the instincts and appetites, are implanted principles, and are, like them, subject to the law of necessity; but to some extent, to an extent involving man's highest responsibility, they are, like the appetites, under

the control of the will; hence, we are commanded "to keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Here, indeed, is the great battle-field of moral conflict—the appetites and desires are our temptations; for their gratification men sometimes sacrifice every interest of their being, prostitute every power of their nature, and in the end miss of eternal life and lose themselves. We are required not only to keep the body under and bring it into subjection, to crucify the flesh with the lust thereof, but also to bring into captivity every desire of the flesh and of the mind.

The desire for wealth, for power, the domestic affections, friendship, patriotism, philanthropy, are all principles implanted by our Creator in our nature; they arise of necessity when the occasion occurs; they all seek as a proximate end a real good; they are, therefore, to be exercised, indulged, gratified. It is no sin that we have them; it is positive defect if we have them not. Great strength and intensity in these desires and affections is no affliction, but rather a blessing. But though man may lawfully desire wealth, no matter how intensely, the more so the better, he may not become a miser; he may be, he ought to be, diligent in business, economical, frugal; he may, he ought, to provide for his own wants and the wants of those dependent upon him, both for the present and the future, but he must not make money his god. He may seek it as a means to something higher, he may seek it even for its own sake, provided he do not thereby sacrifice a higher good; the subordinate must never be allowed to occupy the place of the ultimate, the ultimate must be supreme. Herein is discipline, herein is duty; to "do whatever we do with an eye single to the glory of God." The glory of God is the good of his creatures—this good must be chosen as the supreme end of all desires. To habitually discipline the desires and affections into harmony with such a choice is self-culture as to the sensibilities. Happy the man who has so schooled himself in the school of Christ as that appealing to the searcher of hearts he may say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." That this is utterly impossible to mortals under the sun, without grace, is what every intelligent theologian will most positively and emphatically affirm, and it is what no true philosopher will attempt to deny.

*Mental Discipline as to the aesthetic Nature.*—That a high satisfaction in consciousness, a positive enjoyment, a real good comes from an appreciation of the beautiful, the sublime, and whatever else are adapted to gratify the taste, either as present in real life or represented by the imagination, is fully evinced in the experience of all men, even children and savages not excepted. But this part of our constitution as much as any other, probably more than some others, requires cultivation, and the degree of enjoyment therefrom is proportionate to the degree of perfection attained. Man, therefore, owes it to himself as a means of promoting his personal good, that he devote attention to those pursuits by which his taste and imagination are improved. It is his duty to seek and enjoy pleasure in the beauties of nature and art. The danger here is the same as elsewhere; it is found in the tendency and inclination to make these pleasures supreme. The devotees of art seem to think there can be no danger lurking near pleasures so refined; but, alas, how fatal this mistake! An artist without religion; who is less a man than he? Usually such are among the most worthless and useless specimens of humanity to be found.

*Mental Discipline as to the Will.*—In the will we have personality, the man himself. Here is obligation and responsibility; here conscience utters its voice, makes its demands. By choices moral character is determined. "I would, but ye would not;" "ye will not come to me that ye might have life ;

"whosoever will come, let him come;" "whosoever cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;" "this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men choose darkness rather than light." All that has been said in this and in a previous chapter on the subject of self-culture, and abundantly much more might be said, all centers here in the power of volitionating choices. Here is found that which determines, controls, governs all that pertains to morals.

It is the man himself, always choosing the supreme good, and all other good subordinate to the supreme.

It is by doing so that he acquires facility in the doing. At first duty may cost self-denial, may be determined after severe conflict, and discharged

at the expense of ceaseless vigilance and vigorous effort; but once done additional strength is acquired, so that repetition becomes easy; the pathway shines brighter and brighter, and wisdom's ways become pleasant, and her paths paths of peace. That man owes it to himself to make duty the guiding star of his life, the governing motive of all his actions and enterprises, is too evident to require discussion. It is the only method by which he may secure the end of his being, the only method by which he can make existence a blessing to himself, useful to others, and an honor to God.

## **8.3. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.**

We have said that man owes it to himself that to the extent of his ability he seek the perfection of his powers; especially that he so educate his intellect that he be a man of extensive information, of sound judgment, and a correct reasoner; that be so discipline his volitioning faculty that he may always hold his appetites, desires, and affections under control, keeping their gratification within the limits prescribed by our Creator, never allowing their gratification to peril a greater good than it confers. Now, it is confessed that no man living ever does this perfectly. Theoretically, its possibility may be affirmed; for, since no man is obligated to do what he cannot do, to say he cannot perfectly meet his obligations is to say he cannot do what he can do. But theory aside for the present, the fact is patent that, no matter what man can do, we know he does not do his very best. We here add, and this is the point now especially in view, that without religion man not only fails to do his best, but he also makes an utter failure. He not only comes short of what he might *be*, but he *is* also diametrically the opposite to what he *ought to be*. The direful, the dreadful result of an utter failure is avoidable only through the provisions of grace. "Without me ye can do nothing." To be without God is to be without hope. Without grace we not only negatively fail to get good and do good, but we also positively incur evil and do evil. Hence it is a man's duty to himself to avail himself of all the helps proffered him by the grace and mercy of God. The Bible abundantly assures us that he who seeks shall find, that to him that asketh shall be given, the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit, in degrees, at times,

and under circumstances adequate to all the necessities of a holy life and character. But these proffers of grace are conditioned upon man's faithful use and improvement of all the divinely appointed means of grace providentially within his reach.

We then catalogue among the duties a man owes to himself, private, domestic, and social prayer, the reading of the Holy Scriptures, hearing them read and expounded in the Church of God, public worship, and conformity to all the covenanted obligations of membership in the household of faith.

# CHAPTER 9: DUTIES TO OUR FELLOW-MEN, OR MORALITY.

## 9.1. WHAT IS REQUIRED.

"THOU shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment. And the second is like; namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Love works no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well. Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? This commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."

These, as well as all other Scriptures, teach that all obligation is discharged by obedience to two commandments, and that these two are inseparable; they interpenetrate, they mutually imply each other, so that all obligation is expressed by the one single word "*love*." As the glory of God is seen in the well-being of his creatures, so that state of mind which adoringly recognizes the divine glory, which is a single eye to the glory of God, is a state of mind which seeks the well-being of God's image. To love our neighbor, then, according to the commandment, in itself, or in itself with what it implies, or with that with which it is connected inseparably, is to fulfill the whole law, to meet all obligations. Morality implies piety; piety involves morality; all duty is concentrated in, is determined by, one single state of mind. What is that love that one thing, which is *the* fulfilling of the law? What is it to love our neighbor as ourselves? Love is a

term of extensive and various uses; it signifies a state of mind which has reference to various and different objects, and is characterized by the objects to which it refers.

We are said to love money, books, and other inanimate things. In this case the feeling is chiefly a desire—normally a desire for some good to ourselves, which these things are adapted to confer; abnormally we may desire things for their own sake, as when a miser desires gold. The passion for animals differs from the love of things, chiefly in that it may be a desire for good towards the animals themselves, as well as a desire for the good we may derive from them. Pity is a desire for good towards objects considered as wretched, miserable, unhappy. Self-love is a desire for good to ourselves.

Benevolence a desire for the good of others. Admiration is awakened by an apprehension of excellence in its object. Complacency is a delight and joy awakened by an apprehension of excellence, purity, holiness, and is accompanied by a sympathy with, and an affection for, him who possesses these perfections. Rational love is an immanent preference, a permanent, habitual, governing choice; its object is the good of all sentient beings; it is conditioned upon an apprehension of good as the supreme end of rational, sentient existence. It is distinguished from love of every other kind and degree, in that it is free, not necessitated; it is a choice that the subject may or may not volitionate.

These definitions, though very imperfect, are sufficiently accurate for our present purpose. They make it evident that what is commanded in the law, and is declared to be the fulfilling of the law, is rational love, and that it cannot be any other. However, as this may be doubted, a further discussion may be needful. All other affections, to some extent, are governed by the law of necessity, and therefore cannot, so far forth, be a matter of command, obligation, and responsibility. The paternal and filial affections, friendship, patriotism, and philanthropy are implanted principles; that is, on the occurrence of proper occasions, they arise from the necessity of our nature. Parents are, to be sure, commanded to love their children; but that.

which is the object of the command is something beyond the natural

instinctive affection, for this cannot be volitionated, either as to its existence or non-existence: if it be present, the parent cannot will its absence; if it does not exist the parent cannot, by a direct act of will, call it into being. We may volitionate the conditions on which the feeling arises; hence obligation, law, command, must have respect to those antecedent volitions and not to the affection itself.

Admiration awakened by excellence is not the fulfilling of the law, for it is necessitated. Very wicked people may admire that which is admirable; and, moreover, we are commanded to love irrespective of the character and conduct of the objects of our affection—we are to love our enemies, even those who persecute and spitefully use us. The love commanded is the same as that which God exercises towards his creatures; it is good will to all, it is that which seeks the highest good of all; it is a subject of command, because it is a preference of the will, a choice of this highest good as the supreme end of being. To it we are obligated, because it is a rational free act that may not be done in obedience or disobedience to law. It is the fulfilling of the law, because it is the very thing the law requires. It is the sum total of all commandments, because it existing, all subordinate acts of obedience follow, as effect follows cause. Let a man intelligently, rationally, freely make choice of the greatest good as his supreme end; let him do this without mental reservation; let him thus consecrate himself wholly, entirely to duty, and all acts of life and dispositions of mind requisite to carrying out this, his governing purpose, will naturally, necessarily follow. By this one act of choice, existing as an immanent preference, he purposes, as he has ability, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, do good unto all men; by this permanent preference he purposes all those acts of self-culture, of moral discipline, of religious education, which are the conditions of right dispositions, tempers, and habits of mind; by this one perpetuated act he turns his whole being Godward, and, as a consequent, there comes down to him complacent love, the blessedness of a sympathy with, and an affection for, the infinite beauty of holiness—"the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost."

## 9.2. HOW IS DUTY DISCHARGED.

We have thus, as above, indicated what we understand our duty to our fellow-men to be. We now come to consider how this duty is to be discharged; or, more properly, to inquire how the discharge of duty is manifested in the practical details of every-day life. This topic is a plain and obvious one, considered as to its general applications, which is all that is admissible in ethics. Casuistry, the consideration of specific duties in peculiar circumstances, requires treatises too voluminous for ordinary reading and study. All Writers on practical ethics must, in a case so obvious, pursue substantially the same track of thought—the putting, the classification, and the arrangement may be different, but the substance and leading statements must be the same. Dr. Hopkins says, "If we would love our fellow-men as we do ourselves, we must, 1. Regard, and, if necessary, aid in securing, their rights; 2. Supply their wants; and 3. Do what we can to perfect and direct their powers." Dr. Wayland, as I suppose, would call the first of these Duties of Reciprocity, and the second and third Duties of Benevolence. Dr. Wayland founds all obligation on the relations rational beings sustain to each other; or, rather, affirms that all obligations arise out of relations; and the duties of reciprocity according to his showing, arise out of the relation of equality. That "all men are created free and equal, and have certain inalienable rights" he interprets to mean that there is among men an equality of rights, not an equality of condition. That is, every man has the same right to use the means of happiness which providence has placed within his reach that any other man has to use the means of happiness which providence has placed within his reach.

The natural or God -given rights which are equal among all men have respect to, 1. Life; 2. Liberty; 3. Property; 4. Character; and, 5. Reputation. For the protection of these all just governments are organized.

The statement of these rights, of the methods of their security and defense, of the possible violations, and of the punishments to be inflicted by the individual or society in cases of violation, constitute the themes of discourse in practical ethics. The same topics, so far as the rights and obligations of society are concerned, constitute the science and art of civil government. Ethics includes the rights, obligations, and duties of both the individual and society; civil government pertains only to the latter.

In the common arrangement of these topics, duties to men as men are first in order, and after these duties arising out of domestic, social, and civil relations.

## 9.3. DUTIES TO MEN AS MEN.

9.3.1. AS TO THEIR RIGHTS. (a) *Their Right to Life.* "Thou shalt not kill: he that sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man. He that smiteth a man so that he die shall be surely put to death. Whoso killeth any person the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses; but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die: at the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses shall he that is worthy of death be put to death, but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God); that thy land be not defiled which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same, for he is the minister of God to thee for good: but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. If I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die."

These passages recognize man's right to life as the highest possible; they prohibit malicious homicide or murder under the severest possible penalties; they do so for a reason which is applicable to man as man—namely,

"he was created in the image of God." They therefore show that the prohibition, and the capital punishment by which it is sanctioned, is for

all men in all the ages. The law enacting the death penalty was given to Noah, a representative of the race; and the whole of the Mosaic law referring to the sin of murder is re-enacted in the New Testament with enlarged significance and intensified solemnity of sanction; the magistrate bears not the sword in vain—he is the minister of God, the avenger to execute wrath. These passages further show that though life must be protected even at the expense of life, so that homicide in self-defense is not only not forbidden, but also, if necessary, morally obligatory; yet punishment for the crime of murder must not be executed by the individual, but is binding upon the magistrate after adequate proof, or on the testimony of credible witnesses.

The principles taught in these passages accord with the instinct of self-preservation, with the dictates of reason and natural justice, and with the universal judgment of men. All men in all ages have not only felt themselves at liberty, but also morally bound, when attacked by a ruffian with a murderous intent, to defend themselves by taking, if need be for defense, the life of the assassin. If of two men, one must die, all agree that it should be the aggressor, and not the aggrieved; the guilty, and not the innocent. Homicide in self-defense, then, is required by the law of love; and if a man love his neighbor as himself he will, when his neighbor is attacked with murderous intent, aid his neighbor in his defense to the extent of taking, if need be for defense, the ruffian's life. In like manner and for the same obvious reason, when the lives of our fellow-men are imperiled by riotous assault, duty requires even the individual, to the extent of his ability, to defend those exposed lives at any cost; but especially is it morally binding upon the magistrate to disperse the mob, and when possible in no other way to do so by the use of the sword or other instrument of death, which it is his duty to "bear not in vain."

The right to life is conferred by him who gave it; and the right to take life must be derived from the same source. This is primarily conferred upon the magistrate. "He is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath.

"For whatever purpose, then, the death penalty is executed, whether to punish crime or to prevent it, the power to execute it is primarily lodged with the government. It belongs, therefore, to the individual, or to any number of persons as individuals, only by the necessities of the case; as

when in the absence of the governmental power and authority life is imperiled, and can be protected in no other way than by prompt execution from the hands of those present. What in American parlance is called lynch law is in every way extremely reprehensible. There is no exception, unless it be in the extreme case when government has become so corrupt as to favor criminals, or so weak as to fear them; and even in such a case it would seem that the proper thing to do is to displace the corrupt or feeble government-peaceably if possible, forcibly, if necessary—and inaugurate a magistracy which will be "a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well."

On the principle that the life of an aggressor may be taken when necessary to protect the life of another, for the same reason that it is the duty of the magistrate to protect when needful the lives of his subjects by the death of rioters, it is the duty of the government to resort to arms when another country assumes towards it a warlike attitude, and it is the duty of citizens to sustain the government in so doing. Of course it is not required that the government wait till a foreign invasion has actually taken place; it is enough to know that the lives of its subjects are in peril. When satisfactory evidence of actual peril exists, warlike measures may and ought to be adopted, and the individual citizen is morally bound to do what may be necessary for him to do, not only to protect his own life, but also, as he is bound to love his neighbor as himself, to protect his neighbor's life.

So far all are agreed. Life may be taken when necessary for the defense and protection of life: first, and always, by the government, when it is in the power of government to provide the requisite protection; and, second, by the individual citizen or citizens, when in the absence of the governmental power there is; no defense except in their own hands.

But it is asked, May not a man be justified in taking life for some other reasons than the defense of his own life? and may not a nation make war for other reasons than to defend the lives of its subjects? Does not a man forfeit his right to life in other ways than by assault with intent to kill?

It is usually said that a man forfeits his life not only by murder and by attempting the life of another, but also by attempting house-breaking or

robbery in the night, and by resisting the officers of the law. And it is said that nations may make war to defend the honor of the government, or to protect the liberties and the property of its subjects. That is to say, personal liberty and property are natural rights, which under some circumstances may be put in the same category as the natural right to life, and be defended even at the same cost. Is this so? A robber with presented pistol demands my money or my life; no matter, so far as I can see in respect to the present question, whether in the night or by day, whether within my house or far out on an uninhabited plain. Now, suppose it is manifestly in my power to fire first, am I morally bound to do so? if I do, am I justified?

Most men answer yes, very promptly and very confidently. It is, however, manifest that they do so assuming that the alternative is between my life and the life of the robber; but the supposition I make puts the alternative between delivering up my property or taking the robber's life.

May I take life to save my property? May a nation make war to avoid an unjust tribute? I know of but two ways to answer these questions. The one is to inquire, What say the Scriptures? They certainly speak of other crimes as

"worthy of death" besides the crime of murder, and they certainly approve other than purely defensive wars; and that this is not peculiar to Old Testament times is manifest, among other New Testament allusions and references, from St. Paul's recognition of crimes other than murder as worthy of death. The other method of reply to our present inquiry is to turn to our fundamental question, and inquire which course of conduct will produce the greatest good. Certainly it is not possible for human wisdom to determine whether the surrender of property or the taking of life in the case supposed accords best with an eternal principle of right; but we may possibly be able to form a judgment, reliable as a guide in the case, as to which of the two alternatives promises the greatest good to the greatest number. Now, were it well understood, in popular opinion, in civil and ecclesiastical jurisprudence, that no man or nation has the right in any circumstances to defend property by taking the life of assailants, and that no well-disposed person would ever do so, it is plain to our thought that a necessary security for the natural right of property would

be wanting. To place such an opinion effectually and fully in the public mind would be to remove the foundations of the social structure; it would plunder the race of an inviolable right, and deprive it of one of the most effectual means of securing the highest good.

We say, then, there are crimes by which a man may forfeit his right to life other than the crime of an intent to kill. There are other purposes, for which an individual may take life, and a nation may make war, than the purpose of defending life.

The difficulties in the case lie in the fact that the justification is found in the circumstances; and the judgment as to what those circumstances justify is to be made by imperfect men, who are themselves deeply interested parties.

No specific rules can be given to guide human conduct in such cases.

The greatest good is here, as in all human actions, to be the governing motive, and here, as every-where else, what is promotive of that greatest good is right. To determine the tendencies of conduct is the great practical question submitted to human judgments for decision. And here is the reason why so many of the wars which have desolated the earth have been waged without just cause, and why of so many more it may be questioned whether they were morally justified. War without just cause is an enormous crime; but, when necessary for the proper protection of natural rights, may be morally binding both upon magistrate and citizens as a duty due to their fellow-men.

But it must be distinctly understood, and always kept in mind, that violent resistance in any form and in any degree, most especially resistance unto blood, when justified, always presupposes a manifested purpose on the part of assailants to violate our rights by force. So that in all cases of violent conflict one party or the other, or both of them, must be held guilty and responsible for the enormous evils which always attend such conflicts.

Plainly, differences of opinion in respect to rights which cannot be settled by the parties concerned are, according to Christian principles, to be referred to disinterested parties for settlement, either by arbitration or by

the decisions of legally constituted courts of law. For the settlement of private differences provisions exist in all civilized countries. Perhaps even here arbitration is better. For national differences arbitration may always be resorted to; and if legal processes are preferable, an international court or a congress of nations could be easily established. Therefore, we repeat that violent assault between individuals, and war between nations is always a crime, for which one party or both are responsible. If both parties are content to settle differences by arbitration, of course there will be no conflict; if one party is, and the other is not, so disposed, then the party refusing to arbitrate, and manifesting its purpose of violent assault, is guilty of, and responsible for, all that follows. If both parties refuse arbitration, and contemporaneously purpose and prepare for violence, then both are guilty, no matter which is in the right as to the questions of difference.

Americans justify the war of the Revolution among other reasons as a necessary means of protecting the right of property; taxation without representation is regarded as an injustice to be repelled even at the expense of shedding blood. The war of 1812 was chiefly a defense of personal liberty; the impressment of sailors on American vessels by British authority was considered a violation of a natural right. The recent war was for the protection of the government; to disperse the union of the States was regarded as rebellion against lawful authority, to be resisted for the same reason that riotous assaults and mob violence are to be resisted.

When governments become oppressive, and the people have reasonable grounds for the expectation of success, it is judged they have a natural right to resist the powers that be, and inaugurate a new state of things and another sovereignty; that is, revolution is justifiable when the people have reasonable expectations of success in resisting an oppressive and unjust government.

We do not deem it needful either in this or any other connection to discuss the practices of duelling or suicide; they are obviously enormous sins against our fellow-men and against God—in every case, idiots and lunatics excepted, the duelist, the suicide, is a murderer.

Duties to men as men, ( *b.*) *As to their Right to Liberty.*—The idea of liberty here is not freedom of will, liberty to choose, but freedom of action, liberty to do as we choose; it may be regarded as physical, intellectual, or religious. Physical liberty is freedom from constraint by another in doing, in all outward acts, as we choose. We have physical liberty when we may work or be idle; work at one employment or another, go or stay, travel in this direction or its opposite; in a word, do in all physical acts without restraint as we please. We are free intellectually when we may without compulsion, as we please, read or remain ignorant, study one branch of knowledge or another, entertain an opinion or its opposite, publish our thoughts or be silent, publish one set of opinions or another. We have religious liberty when at our own option we may worship or neglect it, may worship in one form or another, may adopt and abet this, that, or the other creed, or reject all creeds; in a word, may, as we choose, be religious or irreligious. That this liberty, provided always that its exercise does not interfere with the rights of others, is a natural and inalienable right, is evident, first, from the teaching of the Scriptures. The precept which requires all men to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them, involves this; for every man regards personal liberty as a right second only to his right to life; we cannot, therefore, love our neighbor as ourselves, unless we leave every man in full possession of his physical, intellectual, and religious liberty, and so far forth as we have ability and need require, aid him in defending and maintaining this natural right. To deprive a man of his personal liberty disqualifies him for the discharge of many duties required in the Scriptures—as, for example, the duty of parents to educate their children. Slavery annihilates domestic relations, and takes, as it chooses, from the parent all authority and control over his household. It claims also the right to dictate and limit, at its pleasure, educational advantages and religious privileges. That personal liberty is a natural and inalienable right is evident, secondly, because it is essential to the security of man's highest good. Liberty is not, in this respect, equal to life, for to deprive man of life is to deprive him of all the good continuance in life could confer, and man, even in slavery, can secure to himself some earthly good—can, to some extent, secure the end of life; but when deprived of his personal liberty his highest possible good becomes to him an impossibility. This same truth is evident, thirdly, from the fact that it is the common judgment of mankind, "We hold these

truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Some, indeed, profess to think otherwise, and claim that they are born to govern, while others are born to serve; but all proffered arguments by which attempts are made to sustain such a position are fallacious; sophisms and special pleadings are all the defenses the advocates of such a doctrine have at their command. In our country the time has passed in which, even in appearance, it seems necessary to show the fallacy of these alleged arguments for slavery. We pass them all in silence as undeserving of serious attention, and assume that, a selfish interest aside, all men accept as axiomatic the affirmation that personal liberty is a natural right. Fourthly, the opposite of this doctrine is absurd or self-contradictory. If all men are not equally entitled to personal liberty the difference must be founded upon something.

No other thing can claim to be the basis of an inequality of right except inequality of condition; but if inequality of condition confer inequality in right, then rights would perpetually conflict and mutually destroy each other; rights founded upon superiority in physical strength would destroy those founded upon intellectual superiority, and these, in turn, annihilate those founded upon physical superiority, and so on to the end of the chapter.

The general doctrine is as stated above: every man has a natural and inalienable right to himself, to his whole person, body and mind, to do or not to do, to do this or to do that, as he chooses, and this right he has to himself is equal to the right any man has to himself, provided, in all cases, the exercise of this right does not interfere with the rights of his neighbor.

The difficulties in interpreting and exercising this right may be obviated; the objections to its existence and exercise may be answered, and the exceptions, limitations, and violations defined by an intelligent application of the proviso. The right has no exception or limitation, is exposed to no objection or violation so long as the rights of others are duly respected. Parents are obligated to care for their children; they have, therefore, a right to control them during their dependence, and for a time afterwards, as remuneration for the care and expense of training.

Disobedience to parents, then, during minority, is a violation of the parents' rights. The parent may transfer his right of control, as in the case of indentured apprenticeship. A man may, for a consideration, dispose of his services, become a servant for wages; but as this is his own voluntary disposal, the restrictions to his natural liberties is no violation of his rights.

It is objected that if a man be allowed unrestrained physical liberty he may be idle and come to want. We reply, to some extent, in some cases, he may do this without interference of others' rights; and; in such cases, the remedy is starvation. Within limits, it is ordained that he that will not work neither shall he eat; but as government is established by divine authority, and is required to make provision for the poor and destitute, it has the right to protect itself against unnecessary pauperism by restricting the liberty of idlers and compelling them to labor.

It is again objected, that if men are allowed intellectual liberty without restraint, they will neglect the means of culture and remain in ignorance and barbarism. The reply is the same as above, so far forth as their ignorance is no violation of others' rights it is their right, if they so choose, to remain ignorant; but so far forth as a divinely instituted government requires intelligence in the citizen, it is the right of government to control the education of its subjects to the extent of compulsory education. The same principle applies to religious liberty; a man may be irreligious, even profane and wicked to any extent he may choose, provided his wickedness does not interfere with his neighbor's rights; his accountability in such a case is unto God and not unto men; but so far forth as the essential good of community requires, it is the right of government, being made by divine authority the conservator of the essential good of the commonwealth, to restrain religious liberties within the limits required by the public good.

Hence slanderous, blasphemous, licentious, and treasonable words and publications are to be prohibited, and the crime of uttering them made punishable by law.

Does anyone here interpose a counter objection that, such restraints being allowed, the government will be liable to restrict freedom of

opinion and the liberty of the press, place restraints upon conscience, and interfere with religious rights? We reply, This is possible, even quite probable in many cases, and hence it is incumbent upon the moralist to insist as strenuously that community shall respect the rights of the individual as he does that the individual shall respect the rights of his neighbors.

The protection of individual rights against infringement by the government is well secured by the right of trial by jury and of an appeal.

The limitations of governmental authority in respect to personal liberty are well defined, and generally understood. A man may not be deprived of physical liberty, either by imprisonment or restraint, except, for crime of which he has been convicted after fair and impartial trial; he may be detained for trial under legally attested accusation. Governmental restraints upon intellectual and religious liberty are of more difficult adjustment. When an individual is accused of slander, treason, or blasphemy, or of publishing what is licentious or otherwise destructive of public morals, it is doubtless difficult in many cases to determine to what extent legal interference is requisite. When the injured have themselves the means of repelling the injury, as when error is published which may be refuted by argument, legal interference is rather an injury than a benefit. In all cases where free discussion is adequate protection, an open field, and fair play is all that need be demanded. But in all other cases it is obvious that the government is under most solemn obligation to interfere and punish this whole class of crimes with uncompromising severity. A man's religious liberty may not be interfered with except when he so uses it as to interfere with the rights of others; so that manifestly government has no authority in matters of religion except to secure its own rights and to prevent its subjects from interfering with each other's rights.

Duties to men as men, (c) *As to the Right of Property.* The right of property is the right to use something in such manner as I choose. Duty to others in respect to this is easily understood by reference to our own convictions respecting this right as it applies to what we call our own.

We have, concerning certain things, an intuitive conviction that they are ours in a sense that is exclusive; we feel we have a right to appropriate

them as we choose, and that no other person has any similar right to the same things. This feeling arises in childhood long before it could be created by any process of education. We also feel a sense of injustice when these things are taken from us without our consent, or with our consent forcibly or fraudulently obtained. Contemporaneous with this feeling of injustice towards ourselves, we feel a sentiment of righteous indignation towards those who thus injure us. Our nature prompts us instinctively to resist, to the extent of our ability, any attempt to defraud us of what we feel righteously belongs to us; and that our fellow-men are morally bound to sustain us as far as need be in this resistance. That is to say, we feel that all men are morally bound to respect our right to the things we possess, and to assist us as need be in defending such right. Hence; our duty to others is reciprocally to respect and defend their property rights.

On what ground do we affirm the obligation to respect and defend the right of property? First, because the Holy Scriptures recognize this right as sacred, natural, and exclusive. Nowhere in the Bible is the right of property denied, and nowhere is it referred to as a human device. Two of the ten commandments presuppose it, and a large part of the Word of God refers to it either directly or remotely. All Bible injunctions respecting frugality and economy, honesty in trade, promptness in the payment of debts, hospitality towards strangers, and charity to the poor; all denunciations and threatenings of punishment for covetousness, for dishonesty in deal, for theft and robbery, for selfishness in respect to the *meum* and *yuum* in all its various forms; all these injunctions, both of requirement and denunciation, plainly teach or necessarily imply that the right to property is a natural right, and that it is God's will that men should sacredly regard it and rigorously defend it.

Second, that to respect and defend the right of property is morally binding is clearly evinced from the obvious fact that it is essential to the well-being of the individual and of society.

If a man has no exclusive right to what he produces all motive to economy and frugal foresight is removed, and industry is restricted to provision for the present. In such a case accumulation would not occur, there would be neither tools nor capital, and man would be left with nothing but his teeth

and claws to provide for his necessities. Let all ideas of property die out of the minds of men, and the race would speedily sink to barbarism, and then to extinction. In all ages of the world, among all the peoples dwelling upon the face of the earth, man's progress toward perfection and the public regard for the right of property have ever kept even pace, and been in exact proportion the one to the other.

The arguments adduced by communists and others for a community of goods are fallacies. The inference from the fact that the disciples at Jerusalem immediately after Pentecost had all things in common, proves nothing in favor of a universal community of goods, for the facts of history prove that this was limited to the Jerusalem Church, and continued only a short time.

Furthermore, the address to Ananias supposes that his property was his, subject to his exclusive control, and that his sin consisted not in withholding what did not belong to him, but in pretending to donate what he withheld. Again, the contribution made by the Gentile Churches for the poor at Jerusalem implies one of two things, either that they continued to have all things in common and had all become paupers, which is a poor recommendation of communism, or that there was at Jerusalem at that time a financial distinction between the poor and others. Again, the utter failure, at all times and among all people, of all attempts to annihilate the private right to property evinces the futility, fallacy, and falseness of the system.

The affirmation that capital is a malicious conspiracy against labor is a most patent error; for even though capitalists were malicious—the assumption that they are is evidently an atrocious slander—but even if they were, the interests of capital and labor are by the necessities of the case so thoroughly and perfectly identified that such a conspiracy would be suicidal.

It is for the interest of capital that labor be sufficiently remunerative to attract and satisfy laborers. When laborers are few capital must be idle; when labor is unrewarded it is imperfectly done, and capital so employed is employed at a loss.

The assumption that loving one's neighbor as we love ourselves requires

that we be as willing that our neighbor enjoy the products of our labor as that we enjoy it ourselves is sheer nonsense; for such a state of mind is neither loving our neighbor as ourselves nor better than ourselves—it is loving neither, but injuring both.

The conduct of the apostles in respect to a community of goods proves that the practice is not unlawful; that if a company of persons choose to establish such a partnership they do not thereby necessarily commit sin.

Perhaps it proves more, even,—that under some conditions of life such a partnership may be to a small number temporarily advantageous.

We hold that under any condition of general society that has ever yet obtained among men, or is ever likely to obtain, to annihilate the right an individual has to the products of his own labor is to do him an injustice and to inflict a positive detriment upon society.

The right to property may be acquired, first, directly *by the gift of God*. A man who enters upon unappropriated lands and continues to occupy and improve the same, acquires thereby a right to said lands that is exclusive of all others, which right he may transfer by gift or sale. If he leave without a transfer of his right, the lands then become unappropriated, and may be entered upon by others; but while he or his successors remain in actual possession they may not be disturbed. Suppose a savage take possession of unappropriated lands, and because it requires a thousand acres to support by hunting and fishing him and those dependent upon him, does he thereby acquire a right to said thousand acres which will exclude ten civilized men who, by agricultural and other civilized pursuits, can support themselves and families by the products of the same thousand acres? Perhaps all will say, at once, he has acquired a right, and that the civilized man may not dispossess him of any portion of the thousand acres without paying him what wild lands are worth to a savage. But suppose the savage unwilling, for any price, to relinquish his right, may he be compelled to do so? This is a difficult question, for, on the one hand, it may be said no man can, without injustice, be deprived of any right, whatever it be, without his consent; and, on the other hand, it may be said that when barbarism and civilization come face to face, so that one or the other must yield, it is evidently God's will that the former

give place; and, plainly, it is for the greatest good of the greatest number that it should so be.

The right of property may be acquired, secondly, directly by labor.

Whatever is the products of one's own labor is his to the exclusion of all others. When products are the resultants of combined labor each party is evidently entitled to only that part of the product which his own labor has produced. Capital is the result of past labor; when, therefore, the laborer uses the capital of another, he and the capitalist must share the product in just proportion to the labor each has bestowed. In the arrangements of civilized society the just distribution of products among laborers and capitalists has been, in all ages, and is still, a question of great difficulty. We have not the assurance to attempt the solution of a problem which the philosophers and statesmen of the ages have failed to solve.

The right of property may be acquired, thirdly, indirectly by exchange, by gift, by will, by inheritance, by accession, and by possession. When one delivers property to another for a consideration, it is called exchange; if he receives other commodities, it is barter; if money, sale; when he disposes of his property without a consideration, it is a gift; when he directs as to the disposition of his property after his death, his heirs are said to acquire their right by will. If a man die without a will, being possessed of property, the government divides his estate, as it supposes he would have done had he made a will; that is; the law determines who are his heirs, and they are said to acquire their right by inheritance. Whatever value one's property produces is his; the fruits of the earth, the increase of animals, alluvions or deposits of earth by natural causes—and this is called property acquired by accession. If a man have had peaceable possession of property for a term of years fixed by law, no matter how possession was obtained originally, he has thus acquired a right that excludes all others; he may not have a moral right to the property, but his peaceable possession imposes upon all others the moral obligation to leave him undisturbed. In such cases the right of property is said to be acquired by possession.

Justice, in respect to property, requires that all transfers be with the full and free consent of the owners, and that his consent be obtained by a full

and truthful representation of the consideration offered. The right of property, therefore, is violated by robbery, by burglary, by theft, by fraud, by cheating, and by false pretenses.

Robbery is taking property with the consent of the owner violently obtained, and is, therefore, a violation of both the rights of person and of property. Burglary is forcibly taking goods by house-breaking at night, and is a violation of the rights of security and property. Theft is taking property without the consent of the owner with no violence, and is a violation of the right of property solely. If property be taken, and the consent of the owner be obtained by forged paper, it is fraud; if by concealment or misrepresentation the owner is ignorant of the consideration offered, it is cheating; if consent be obtained by lying or deception, without an equivalent, it is obtaining property by false pretenses.

When the owner's consent may be fairly presumed, as when a passer-by takes an apple for his own eating from an orchard, or in some cases where spontaneous fruits are so abundant as that the market price is only sufficient to pay for the gathering and transportation; in a word, where the taker is willing the owner should know of his taking, by common consent this is not considered theft. Taking food to preserve life, even if considered of doubtful morality, is very generally excused. The most common cases of the violation of the right of property, and perhaps the only ones requiring discussion in works on ethics, are gambling, speculating, and cheating.

In gambling property is transferred by an appeal to chance, without any equivalent given or received. In some games of chance there is an opportunity for the exercise of skill, and in betting there is oftentimes opportunity for the exercise of judgment; but neither skill nor judgment modify the case when the essential elements of gambling are present; namely, an appeal to chance for the transfer of property without an equivalent either given or received.

When an association owns property which must be sold to be of any value to the association, and no one is willing to pay for the article its full value, then the members may individually contribute in shares the full value of

the article, and determine by lot who shall possess it. Here the contributors receive an equivalent in the benefit conferred upon the association. The money paid for shares is a voluntary contribution to the common cause; if, however, any one is moved to the purchase by the hope of gaining the prize, the benevolence of his contribution is vitiated by the motive which prompts it, he is, in that transaction, guilty of gambling.

That an appeal to chance for the gain or loss of property, in the entire absence of an equivalent for what is exchanged, is wholly vicious and always so, is evident from the terrible ruin wrought by gambling, from the character and intensity of the passions it excites and from the large catalogue of enormous crimes with which gambling almost universally keeps company.

*Speculation.*—The market value of well-nigh all kinds of property is at one time or another subject to great variations. By investing funds in property whose price in the market is fluctuating there is a possibility of speedy and, oftentimes, of great gains; and also, on the other hand, at the same time a possibility of sudden and ruinous losses. If a man has funds which he can afford to lose, which he can lose without damage to his regular business, and without periling his ability to provide for his household, and educate his children, he may invest those surplus funds in property of this kind. This is innocent speculation, and may often times prove a fortunate investment. But where a man perils his livelihood and the well-being of his dependents, and especially where he perils other people's property by borrowing funds and investing them in speculations he commits an egregious crime. Especially in the latter case, wherein he takes his neighbor's funds, and so employs them that his neighbor runs all risks and he pockets all gains, he does what a perfectly honest man will never do. Is it said his creditors intrusted their funds to him because they confided in his judgment as superior to their own?

We reply, his creditors knew or they did not know that all risks and loss, if any, were theirs; and all gain, if any, was his; if they did not know he took advantage of their ignorance, and obtained money on false pretenses; if they did know the true state of the case, and still intrusted their property to his disposal, he is guilty of consenting to be the guardian of incompetents and proving unfaithful to his trust.

Betting on the future price of stocks and commodities, though there is a wide margin for the exercise of judgment and the use of the knowledge of commercial affairs, differs not at all from gambling, since it is an exchange of property by an appeal to chance without an equivalent. The mention of stocks or commodities in the transaction does not vary its nature; for, in the cases we suppose, the seller has nothing for sale, and the buyer does not propose to purchase any thing; it is simply a bet that the market price of the commodity named will, at the given date, be the same, or more or less than the price named in the contract; if it be the same, there is no loss or gain to either party; if more, the seller loses the difference; if less, the buyer sustains the loss.

*Cheating.*—This is in buying and selling, and consists in this: That by concealment or misrepresentation one party induces the other to exchange his property for less than its market value. If the seller, by deceit, induce the buyer to pay more than the market price for what he purchases; or if the buyer, by deceit, induce the seller to take less than the market price for what he sells, it is cheating—in the common acceptation of the term, it is a fraud. The seller is morally bound to furnish his goods at the market price; for this is what he professes to do, and should anyone affirm that he does not do this he would consider it a slander. If his goods rise on his hands, the profit is his; if they fall, he must sustain the loss. Whatever he paid for his merchandise he is allowed and required to sell at market prices. This applies to the goods in which he professes to deal; if a neighbor desire anything else he may have, it is his privilege to ask what he pleases—he does not profess to furnish the commodity in question at market prices. The seller is also bound to acquaint the buyer with the true character of his goods; if there be hidden defects he must show them; if there be peculiar excellencies he may exhibit them. Having presented his goods to the buyer, having acquainted him with their true character, and asked the market price for them, his duty is done. He may or may not assist the buyer's judgment in the selection; he may or may not explain the adaptation of his goods to the buyer's peculiar wants; if it be his duty to do so, it is a duty of benevolence and not a demand of justice. When goods are disposed of at auction it is understood that the buyer takes them at his own risk; at his own price he takes the goods for what he judges them to be.

The buyer who says, It is naught, it is naught, and then goeth his way and boasteth, is a cheat, a fraud. It is not his right to depreciate the value of his neighbor's goods; it is especially dishonest to do so for the purpose of inducing his neighbor to part with his goods for less than their market value. The buyer who uses many words in buying, whose habit is to

"beat down" on prices, is a great demoralizer in matters of business, since his habit is a temptation to the seller to ask a price from which he can afford to fall; and by so much as this habit obtains, the market price is made unstable, and honest men know not how to make their purchases.

If a capitalist have the means of buying all of a given commodity there is in the market, especially if the commodity be one of the necessaries of life, may he do so, and demand an exorbitant price for the same? He may not; for he can not so do and love his neighbor as himself. Such a monopoly in the necessities of life is specially criminal, since it infallibly oppresses the poor. A man may withhold his own products and manufactures at his pleasure, and government may for a consideration of public benefit authorize a monopoly.

If a man have knowledge that property now in his neighbor's possession will soon certainly rise in value, and his neighbor know it not, may he take the advantage of his superior knowledge and purchase the property at the present price? Most men say if the means of that knowledge is equally open to all he may, but if the knowledge was gained by secret connivance he may not; for it is said the owner invested his capital and expended his labor to produce his products, with the expectation that all advantages from unforeseen events would be his; and for him who has expended nothing for those products to clandestinely step in and appropriate them is an injustice to the owner. If a scientist who has spent a fortune and his life in the pursuit of scientific knowledge, and by his knowledge thus gained know to his own perfect satisfaction that a valuable mine is on his neighbor's farm, may he buy that farm at its market value for agricultural purposes? Most would answer yes.

But suppose by mere accident, without special knowledge, a man comes to know certainly that there is a mine on his neighbor's farm, may he buy that farm and say nothing of the mine? Doubtful. It would be more in

accordance with the golden rule to buy the farm, and then make his neighbor a partner in its ownership.

The exchange of property involves not only the doctrine of the buyer and seller, but also that of the borrower and lender. The lender is bound to furnish the article he professes to furnish, and charge the market price for its use. The borrower is obligated to use the property borrowed in the manner stipulated, return it on time, and pay the price for its use. If the property is injured or destroyed while in the borrower's possession it is the lender's loss, provided the property be used as stipulated; but if improperly used, or used in a manner different from agreement, then it is the borrower's loss. If the lender represent his property different from what it is, and the borrower sustain a loss in consequence of said misrepresentation, the lender is liable for the damages.

Whether rates of interest should be determined by law, and to what extent, or whether, like the use of all other property, the price paid for the use of money should be left to be determined by the law of supply and demand, is a question for political economists; but the moralist has to do with the obligation to keep the law when one exists. If the law, in the judgment of the citizen, be not wise, it is plainly his duty to respect it while it remains among the statutes, and to seek its change at the earliest opportunity. But it may be said the law allows a stipulation within limits; common practice allows stipulation without limit; and cases in which usury is pleaded as excuse for non-payment are so rare that it may be taken for granted that the law in the case is of no account. It is not so; a Christian man ought not to pay or receive unlawful interest.

Duties to men as men, (d) *As to their Right to Reputation.* Character is what a man is; reputation is what others think he is. The desire for esteem is an implanted principle; all men instinctively desire the good opinion of their fellow-men. Recklessness in reference to reputation is possible only in extremely depraved minds; when anyone comes to be even indifferent as to what others think and say about him he is far gone in the way of moral ruin. All right-minded people regard their reputation as dear to them; well-nigh, if not equal to, life itself; far more dear than property or even than liberty. A man's reputation is frequently his entire stock in trade, all upon which he may depend as a means of obtaining his

livelihood. To deprive a man of a possession so dear to him, and of such inestimable value, without just cause, is a great crime. We do not here speak of the destruction of a man's good name by false hood—of the obligations of veracity we shall speak further on—

but of depriving one of his good name by any means and in any matter whatever, in the absence of any reason or just cause which makes it duty so to do.

The Bible requires that we "speak evil of no man." This it does with no intimation of any possible exceptions. From this we infer that any variation from a literal observance of the rule must be of the nature of very rare exceptions, justified by very obvious reasons, so much so that it was not needful that the exceptions be specified.

First, it is wrong to minify a man's reputation in our own minds without just cause; that is, to think of him less than we ought to think. I speak not of the obligation to form charitable judgments, but of what justice and equity require. We are bound to think that our neighbors are what they appear to be unless we have positive knowledge of the contrary. Character is judged by conduct as a tree is by its fruits; but in determining the moral character of men's conduct their motives must be taken into account. Of motives, however, we cannot often know certainly what they were; God only searcheth the heart.

We are, therefore, in justice, not to say charity, bound to refer all conduct to right motives, unless the nature of the case render this impossible. That is to say, if a given action may be referred to a right motive it belongs by natural right that the actor have the benefit of such reference; common law allows the accused the benefit of a doubt. But it will be said men are not so good as they seem to be; all men present to public view their best side.

So that, if we regard and treat all men as honest till compelled to think otherwise of them, we shall be deceived in a majority of cases. We reply, On the principle that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong, it is better that we be deceived by even many dishonest persons than that we should injure one honest man by judging him unjustly.

Secondly, if we may not unnecessarily *think* evil of our neighbor, much more are we under obligation not to *speak* evil of him without cause. But suppose we *know* his reputation is better than his deserts, suppose we *know* him to be guilty in a matter where the public judge him innocent, may we not tell the truth in the case? We answer, Not without cause. If no good is done by telling, if no harm is done by silence, then silence is an imperative duty.

Is it said the man has a reputation he does not deserve? the reply is, He has it, it is his by possession, and no man without cause may take it from him.

This case is the same as when property is held by right of possession. That possession may have been unlawfully obtained; but no man, unless he has a better right, is at liberty to dispossess the holder. Whatever a man holds by any right whatever is his till someone shows a better right.

The causes or reasons which require that we bear witness against a neighbor, or make public his evil actions, are *the ends of public justice, the protection of the innocent, and the good of the offender*. When either of these ends may be secured it is not only allowable that the truth be made public, but it is also the solemn duty of him who has the truth to declare it.

If a citizen knows that his neighbor is violating the laws of the land, to the detriment of the commonwealth, it is as much his duty to make complaint to the proper authorities as it is the duty of the court to consider and adjudicate the case when presented to them. When a man knows that another is a vile seducer, and is insinuating himself into the good graces of a virtuous woman, there can be no duty binding upon a human being more imperative than the duty in such a case, to put the exposed upon their guard. If by giving information to parties having power or influence over the offender, there is a probable prospect of his reformation, then duty requires that the information be given. It must be observed that, in all these cases, the same rule that requires that information be given at all, requires that it be given to the proper person. For the violation of civil law complaint is to be made to the legal authorities. For the protection of the innocent information must be given to the party exposed. For the

reformation of the offender information must be given those who have the power to use it for that purpose. In no case is it morally right to publish for the mere sake of publishing, or to blaze evil matters abroad for the mere excitement of doing so; nor is it any apology for the crime of slander that what is told is told under a pledge of secrecy.

Gossip to a neighbor's detriment, in all its forms and under all conditions, is a crime. Blessed is the man that so brideth his tongue as never to speak evil of anyone except when positive duty requires it. Of course, knowing evil of a neighbor, though the circumstances require silence, they do not require us to regard and treat him in our personal intercourse with him as though he were innocent. We owe it to him, as well as to ourselves, that we avoid him, and at least give him a most emphatic letting alone; if he will not hear us, repent and reform, then it is our duty to let him know that he cannot sin and retain the good opinion and neighborly treatment of his fellow-men.

Duties to men as men,—2. As TO THEIR WANTS.—The duties of this class, so far considered, are called duties of reciprocity, because men are morally bound reciprocally to respect and defend each other's rights. The underlying principle postulated in all these cases is the doctrine of equality, equality of rights, not equality of condition. That is to say, every man has the same right to use the means of happiness providentially within his reach as any other man has to use the means of happiness providentially within his reach.

These rights have respect to life, liberty, property, and reputation. Some writers add truth and character—these last, however, we prefer to treat of in another connection. These duties of reciprocity, so-called, are also usually spoken of as duties of justice. We now come to consider another class, usually termed duties of benevolence. These have respect to the physical, intellectual, and moral needs of our fellow-men. What are we morally bound to do in supplying the destitute with food, clothing, shelter, medicine, professional skill, and personal care? how are we to do it? what in providing means of instruction for the ignorant, and means of reformation for the vicious? and how are these duties to be discharged? The duties of benevolence differ from those of reciprocity in several respects. Our fellow-men have no claim upon us, so that they may

demand of us benevolent services, and censure us if we do not render them. They may ask for our contributions; it may be right for them to do so, and we may be under obligation to grant what they request: but our duty and responsibility is to God and not to them; they have no rights in these regards to vindicate, and have no penalties to inflict when their wishes are not complied with.

Again, when benefits are benevolently conferred, the recipient is under obligation to be grateful toward the donor: not so in duties of reciprocity; no gratitude it due for the payment of an honest debt or for any proper respect for natural rights.

Duties of reciprocity may be enforced by civil laws, but not duties of benevolence. Taxes levied for the support of the poor are not of the nature of benevolent contributions. The obligation to benevolence rests upon the good it may accomplish. If, according to the best judgment I am able to form in a given case, I can produce a greater amount of good by the charitable bestowment of my property or the rendering of personal service than by withholding them, I am morally bound to bestow the goods or render the service.

It is obvious that, in all cases where our fellow-men are able to supply their own wants, or to the extent that they are able, to supply them it is for their good, as well as the good of all others concerned, that they should do so; it is, therefore, evident that benevolence is strictly limited to the helpless. To help those who are able to help themselves is an encouragement to idleness and all its associated vices. Charities bestowed upon the undeserving, instead of being productive of good, are every way productive of evil; except where the donor is innocently deceived, and distributes his gifts with a proper motive, he will receive his reward, but the good he sought to do will never accrue to the recipient. We are, therefore, to give food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, shelter to the defenseless, medicine to the sick, personal care to the feeble, books and instruction to the ignorant, and the Gospel of the grace of God to the vicious; in a word, the means of supplying their wants, physical, intellectual, and moral, as we have ability and opportunity, to all, according to their needs, provided always that the recipients of our bounty are not able to supply those wants themselves. It is better to give

an able-bodied man, who is destitute, work and wages, than to give money as a charity. It is better to supply schools and other means of instruction at a price which a poor student, with industry and economy, can pay, or to loan him funds for present necessities, than to give him free tuition or make to him a personal contribution that will defray all of his expenses. It is better to place religious advantages, the means of grace, under such conditions as that the benefits accruing therefrom shall be at some kind of cost to those receiving them, than it is to make salvation so free as to be esteemed of no value by those to whom it is offered. It very frequently happens that the most deserving through natural delicacy—I do not say pride, for oftentimes the fact is far otherwise—through a natural and praiseworthy delicacy, much prefer to suffer rather than ask an alms; it is, therefore, needful that we imitate the Master in "going about to do good;" that is, that we seek out those that are needy and helpless. It is sometimes asked, Must I give to every applicant for alms that comes to my door, or may I turn some empty away? Great caution is needed here lest, on the one hand, we turn all empty away; or, on the other hand, by indiscriminate bestowments we encourage the idle and the vicious in their crimes. No rule can be given, each one must exercise his own judgment. If we must sometimes err, as probably most persons must, it is better to err considerably on the side of liberality than even to lean towards its opposite.

Duties to men as men,—3. As TO THEIR CHARACTER.—Of all works of benevolence none can compare with those which tend to improve the *character* of our fellow-men. To build up one's self in holiness, to lead forward our powers toward perfection, to become true men—this is life's great work. To do this for ourselves is, for every reason, our first duty; but as we love our neighbor as ourselves, we shall strive to do the same for them. To influence them, to persuade them, to aid them as we have ability in this their great labor of life is the highest duty of man to his fellow-man. It is often said man's first duty to his neighbor is to supply his physical necessities; that to give a basket of bread is a higher deed of charity than to give a Bible or any other useful book. We reply, to meet the wants of the body is first in the order of time, but not first in the order of importance. If a neighbor be starving, of course he were a fanatic that should neglect to give the things needful for the body and fall to praying

for the good of the soul; but that is not saying that physical wants solely have claims upon charity, or that those claims are any more imperative than are the claims that come from the needs of the mind. Who can estimate the value of a good character or real goodness? Money is valuable; but he that steals it steals trash, as compared with a good name; and what is a good name as compared with a mind conscious to itself of right? One may be blessed, though men say all manner of evil against him, if they say it falsely and for Christ's sake. What is liberty, or even life itself, as compared with what a man is? If a man be nobody, what does it matter where he is, whether in prison or at large? and if he be nobody, what matters it to him, or to anyone else, whether he be dead or alive?

Since, then, character is a possession of a value too great for estimation; what duty can be required, that can be too great a sacrifice for its conservation? and what process of discipline or what expenditure of resources can be too great for its upbuilding? Who that has a single eye to the glory of God, whose governing motive is the greatest good, who loves his neighbor as himself, will hesitate for a moment to make any requisite contribution of means and services for the perfection of humanity in himself and others?

But how shall this duty, so vastly important, be discharged? First, by abstaining from evil and avoiding even its appearance. Any course of conduct which tends to excite or stimulate evil passions, or to awaken evil imaginations, or to contribute to the gratification of lusts, is destructive of character, so that all men are bound by the highest obligation by which duty can bind them to abstain always and entirely from such courses of conduct. Second, we contribute to the upbuilding and maintenance of good character among men, especially by sustaining institutions of learning and religion. The family, the school, the State, and the Church are all designed to be, ought to be, and to some extent are, means of intellectual, moral, and religious education, and all intelligent good men will do their utmost to sustain these institutions in such conditions as will secure their highest efficiency. But, lastly, every man does more in the way of influencing others by what he is than by what he says or does; hence, the most effectual means of building up goodness in the character of others is to be good ourselves. Let us be true men, and though we be poor and have nothing to give; yea, though we be dependent, and are

ourselves objects of charity; by the silent, secret influences of good character, we shall do much to make the world the better for our having lived in it. Our lives shall not be useless, nor shall we, when the Master makes up his jewels, be without a reward. To all good men there shall be some occasion for the final approval, "thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

Duties to men as men,—4. As TO THEIR DEMAND FOR TRUTH.

Duties of Veracity. Dr. Hopkins places truth in the category of natural rights; and it seems to belong there, though not so obviously as some others.

For the same reason that we call property and reputation natural rights we may call truth a right. If men were not under moral obligation to tell the truth, if they were at liberty to speak either truth or falsehood as their fancy or inclination might dictate, if no dependence could be placed upon men's word, every interest of our earthly life would thereby be constantly in peril, and all interests would suffer incalculably. Plainly, the attainment of our ends in life requires that when men communicate their thoughts one to another they speak the truth. Truth is a natural right, because it is essential to the attainment of man's greatest good. A very large part of human knowledge is derived from the testimony of others. Most of the confidence or faith that prompts and sustains the enterprises of life is faith in the truthfulness of what is told us, and for which truthfulness we have no other assurance than the credibility of those from whom we receive our information. Surely truth is essential to the attainment and security of life's ends.

Again, our Creator has so constituted our natures, and so adapted our circumstances to our constitution, that it is more natural to speak the truth than it is to deceive. Deception requires invention, the assuming of false airs, an unnatural adjustment to surroundings, and the lowest degrees of moral depravity and impudence. Again, that truth is a natural right may be inferred from the universal convictions of mankind respecting its importance and value.

In all jurisprudence authority is given to the courts to place men under pains and penalties as an inducement or motive to speak the truth;

perjury is a crime before the law, and is punishable with severe penalties. Liars are held in universal detestation, so that the Scripture declaration, that all liars have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, does not grate harshly even upon the sensibilities of unbelievers. Many will say that if there is no hell there ought to be one for liars.

The law of veracity requires, when men profess to convey intelligence to others, that to the best of their ability they convey precisely the impression they have in their own minds. They are bound to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Truth may be distinguished as real or moral. A statement is really true when it represents the fact as it really exists; it is morally true when the relator intends to convey the impression of the fact as it exists in his own mind. Hence it is obvious that a statement may be both really and morally true, or both really and morally false, or really true and morally false, or really false and morally true.

Obligation has respect to moral truth; it refers to the intentions of the relator, and requires him universally to intend the conveyance of real truth. A logician may make a supposition, if he put it forth as such; a novelist may write a fiction or a fable, if he give it as such; anyone may express an opinion, if he convey the idea that it is but his opinion; but no one may state *as truth* what he does not know to be the truth. It is obvious that this law refers not merely to the words of the lips, but also to whatever conveys thought, such as gestures, looks, intonations, and emphasis of the voice. It forbids all extenuations and exaggerations; in a word, it requires a full and honest effort, according to our best ability, to convey the impression existing in our minds precisely as it is; or, in other words, it requires an intention full and complete, without mental reservations, to convey the real truth as we understand it.

It is further obvious that the law of veracity applies to intercourse with rational beings. Whether this law is binding to any extent in our conduct towards irrational beings is a matter where there is room for difference of opinion. It is said that it is sometimes necessary to use deception in the management of brutes, idiots, and insane persons. It may be so; and yet, in view of the reflex influence upon our own character of the frequent use

of deception, it is manifestly better never to use it unless necessity require. That deception is not universally sinful seems to be taught by the Scriptures; for ancient warriors were on some occasions divinely authorized to use it; and Christ himself "made as if he would go farther," when he intended to remain.

In what sense are promises and contracts binding? A promise or a contract is binding upon the one party in the sense in which he understood the other party to accept it. A. makes a conditional contract with B. A. writes the contract, and intends a given condition; but before the contract is signed he knows that the terms in which that condition is expressed are ambiguous, and also knows that B. accepts it in a different sense from what he himself intended. A. is bound to fulfill the contract according to B.'s apprehension.

Promises and contracts are not binding when their fulfillment is unlawful or impossible; but if such promises are made, and those to whom they are made, being themselves innocent, sustain losses in consequence of their non-fulfillment, the parties making them are responsible for the damages incurred.

If both parties are equally guilty no obligation to the other is binding upon either. It is, however, sometimes said there is such a thing as "honor among thieves;" it is difficult to see how there can be.

*Oaths.* An oath, in the lowest sense admissible, is a thoughtful, serious, and solemn affirmation under the pains and penalties of perjury. The form used in the courts, "So help you God," is by some understood to be an appeal to God as a witness of the truth or falseness of the testimony to be given; by others it is a prayer to God for special aid, that the witness may then and there certainly testify according to truth; by others it is a prayer that divine favor may not be granted the witness as he shall or shall not testify truly, "So help me God as I tell the truth;" by which the witness is understood to peril his present and eternal well-being on the issue of his present truthfulness; and still others so interpret the expression, "So help you God," as to make it include all the ideas above mentioned.

The legal force of an oath is exhausted in the penalties of perjury.

Without doubt the common apprehension adds nothing more to the legal idea than that an oath is an affirmation made under very solemn circumstances, and it is doubtful whether the affirmation that an oath means more than this is well sustained.

If this be the true interpretation of the nature of oaths, then the controversy respecting their lawfulness disappears; for all will admit that such affirmations may be lawfully made. The New Testament injunction which requires that our communications be Yea, yea, and Nay, nay, has no reference to legal oaths, but is an admonition against the too free use of solemn affirmations, and is not in respect to these an absolute prohibition, for our Savior himself not unfrequently said, "Verily I say unto you." IV. DUTIES ARISING OUT OF SPECIAL RELATIONS.

These are those which relate to the sexes, to husbands and wives, to parents and children, to masters and servants, to magistrates and citizens, to principals and agents. We classify them as domestic and civil.

## **9.4.1. DOCTRINE OF RIGHTS**

The distinction between "Rights of things" and

"rights of persons" is obvious. To consider all rights as founded upon the will of God is much the shortest and apparently the simplest method of reaching the ultimate; but the doctrine of ends, and of the greatest good as the supreme end, finds something back of mere will, and a something contradictory of arbitrary will. Dr. Hopkins, who has given the doctrine of ends the most scientific and philosophic statement, known to the present writer, finds the foundation for the rights of things in the ends of those to whom the right belongs. Thus, I have a right to a given piece of property because the use of the same is promotive of my good: and this right is exclusive, provided it does not interfere with the corresponding rights of others; that is, so far as my fellow-men are concerned I have a right to do with what I call my own as I please (though as toward God I have no right to use the same except for the end which it is adapted to promote), and this right is mine because what I call my own is adapted to promote my good. Dr.

Hopkins finds the foundation for the rights of persons in the ends of those over whom the right is exercised. Thus, a parent has the right of government over his child, because the parent has the power to secure the ends of the child in matters wherein the child has not the power to secure his own ends.

The rights of civil government are based upon the same foundation. The magistrate has the right to command the subject because the government can do for the citizen that which is promotive of the citizen's good, and which the citizen himself cannot do. The right of the divine government itself has the same basis. God can do for his creatures that which is essential to their well-being, and which they cannot do for themselves; therefore, he has the right to command his creatures. And as this power of God extends to our whole being, to all we are and to all we have, we are under obligation of universal obedience. The rights of parents and the rights of civil magistrate extend only to those things essential to the good of the child or subject in respect to which the child or subject is helpless and dependent. No being has any rights over God, because God, being all-powerful, can himself secure his own ends; no being has power to do for God what he cannot do himself.

The rights of parents are not founded upon the mere relation they sustain to their children; for when parents become imbecile, idiotic, or insane, or in any way become incompetent to provide for and educate their children, their rights over their children cease; the civil authorities assume the right, and appoint guardians and teachers. This theory, which founds the right to govern on the ability to benefit the governed, on the power of the government to secure the ends of the governed in matters wherein the governed are incompetent to secure their own ends, avoids the unintelligent abstraction of an eternal right, the objectionable reference to an arbitrary will, and the unscientific supposition of numerous and ever variable relations; it is in itself sufficiently incomplex, and wondrously unifies and systematizes the theory of morals, of rights, and of obligations.

Is it objected that this theory gives scope to the assumption of tyrants and oppressors that might gives right? we reply, first, the theory supposes that the helplessness of the subject is obvious; the assistance required is a

manifest necessity. The claim of slavery, that races of men are thus helpless, and that other races can by assuming rights over them do for them what is essential to their best good, and what they can not do for themselves, is and always has been an assumption. There never was such a race. Secondly, the right conferred is limited to the well-being of the subject. If power possessed by a superior be exercised over an intelligent moral being for any purpose antagonistic to the ends of that moral being it is unlawful, oppressive; it is a violation of natural rights. Hard masters, tyrants, and oppressors find no license in this theory.

The right to govern is a right to control, by force if necessary; and correlative with it, or founded upon it, is obligation to obey, and, in case of disobedience, right to punish. Thus government is constituted. A precept may be observed because the doer sees in the nature of the case a valid reason why he should do so. The person giving the precept may be a parent having the right to command, and the one receiving the precept may be a child under obligation to obey; but if the child do the thing required solely because of the reasons on which the requirement is founded, and wholly irrespective of the authority by which it is enjoined, this is not obedience; nor is there any government in the case. Obedience is when an act is voluntarily performed because righteous authority requires it; disobedience is a voluntary refusal to yield to the demands of righteous authority—that is, to authority founded in rights; penalty is that which results from such disobedience—not those natural necessary consequences resulting from the act itself, which ensue whether the act be one of obedience or disobedience. Penalty, properly so called, is threatened and executed to secure the lawgiver's rights; and these rights are founded upon the good of the subject. Plainly, then, if by any means the authority of the government and the good of the subject can be otherwise secured, as it is in atonement, the penalty may be omitted. There is no abstract justice requiring the invariable, full, and perfect execution of penalty. But it may be said this is to make government ignore man's rational nature. Surely, man must be governed as a rational being, or he is a mere thing. We answer, Government has respect to authority, and where authority is ignored there is no government. But a proper respect for authority may be accompanied with a knowledge of the *rationale* of its requirements. Authority is recognized by a recognition of

rights; the reasonableness of requirements may be another thing. And yet the ends on which rights are founded and the reasons for the command, when fully understood, will be found to be the same thing. Obedience, properly so-called, is prompted by faith or confidence. The subject has full confidence that his law-giver is wise and benevolent, and therefore he obeys him, even though he does not see either the wisdom or the benevolence of the requirement. The more intelligent and rational the subject, the more perfectly will he comprehend the ends of the law and the wisdom and benevolence of the law-giver and the more perfect will be his faith and obedience; but, we repeat, where authority is ignored there is neither faith nor obedience.

## **9.4.2. THE DUTY OF CHASTITY.**

—"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart." Much of our Lord's sermon on the mount was designed to show that the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, which consisted merely in external rites, ceremonies, and observances was defective, was not a fulfilling of the law. God looks at the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The law of chastity, given in the above quotation requires not only abstinence from the outward violation, but also inward purity. A man whose thoughts, imaginations, and desires have become corrupt, will certainly, when a favorable opportunity occurs, outwardly violate the command. Moral character consists in the status of mind, not in the aggregate of outward actions. The law practically considered, or our duty as enjoined by the law, requires a total abstinence from forbidden sexual intercourse, from all conduct that tends to excite lewdness in ourselves or others, from consenting to witness exhibitions tending to licentiousness, be they either conduct, conversation, theatrical performances, books, pictures, or whatever else may excite unnatural and unlawful passions and desires. Duty here requires a man to keep his heart with all diligence; inward purity is secured and maintained in no other way than by a ceaseless and uncompromising vigilance. But inward purity is

attainable. Under the grace and providence of God a man may so fully purpose a chaste and holy life, and so establish habits of purity in thought and desire as that he will, for the most part, avoid even the thought of evil; and if suddenly an unbidden evil thought arise in his mind, it is as suddenly dismissed, he turns from it as from deadly poison, and it fails to do him any harm; he resists the devil and he flees from him. However strong one's desire, however entangling the snares that may be set for him, he may, and therefore he ought to, keep himself pure.

The terms used to designate the various forms in which the law of chastity is violated are defined with sufficient accuracy, and are commonly well understood. Adultery is sexual intercourse between a married person and one not united to him or her for life. Polygamy is a plurality of wives or husbands. Concubinage is temporary cohabitation. Fornication is intercourse with prostitutes or with others under any conditions other than marriage.

Uncleanness generally refers to the character or to the habitual condition of body and mind—an unchaste or licentious person is an unclean person.

The enormity of this crime may be inferred from the terribleness of its consequences. If the licentious have not lost all human sensibility and sunken to brutish stupidity, they must carry with them constantly a most tormenting sense of personal vileness. Uncleanness is a perpetual bar to self-respect, and must, in minds not wholly lost, produce a most revolting sense of self-disgust. The loathing and contempt with which such persons must know others regard them cannot be otherwise than an intolerable burden. The wrath of God they certainly know is out against them, and they must live in perpetual and fearful apprehension of the day when all secrets shall be revealed, and each one receive according to the deeds done in his body. And then the jealousies, contentions, brawling, fighting, and murders which almost invariably accompany or follow these crimes are too terrible for adequate description. And, let it be remembered, that these things come not only to persons in low life, but to all, whoever they are, or under whatever circumstances they live, who transgress in any way the law of chastity.

### 9.4.3. DOMESTIC DUTIES

*Husbands and Wives.*—"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a help meet for him. Male and female created he them, and blessed them. And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.

Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord; for as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman, but all things of God. Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing and obtaineth favor of the Lord. Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall, cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh."

"Holy matrimony is an honorable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocence, signifying unto us the mystical union that is between Christ and his Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence and first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee, and is commended of St. Paul to be honorable among all men." That marriage is a divine institution and not merely a contract between the parties regulated by the civil authorities, is abundantly evidenced not only by the above quoted passages of Holy Writ, but also by all of the very abundant references to it in the whole Word of God. This is also clearly taught in natural religion.

The desire for sex is an implanted principle; the perpetuity of the race depends upon its gratification; the best condition of human society depends upon the proper increase of population. The unlimited and promiscuous intercourse of the sexes is prohibited by the certain issue of innumerable and terribly destructive calamities. The number of the sexes is nearly equal; that of the males is greater, about in the proportion requisite to offset the greater mortality to which they are exposed. One man and one woman will usually have as many children as they can, in a life-time, care for and properly educate. The family, consisting of parents united for life, and of children united by a common parentage, other things being equal, is by far the happiest earthly circle; from it flow the

purest, highest, holiest of earthly pleasures; no other good under the sun can compare, for a moment, with its blessedness. The whole constitution of human life and the whole history of the human race, as well as the testimony of the whole written Word of God, teach that the law of chastity restricts the gratification of the sexual appetite to individuals who are exclusively united to each other for life; that the marriage covenant is a contract, having all the solemnity and binding force of an oath between two persons to observe strictly toward each other this law of chastity; and that it is the will of God that men and women thus covenant with each other and faithfully observe the obligations of their contract.

Celibacy, under some circumstances, may be allowable as an exception.

"There are some eunuchs which were so born from their mother's womb; and there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." In the times of persecution, when Christian families were liable to be separated by violence, St. Paul advised those who were so minded not to marry,—this, in view of the present distress, might be better. Soldiers, seamen, missionaries, and others may be called to duties to which marriage might be a detriment. In all cases marriage is a matter of personal choice and preference; and yet we hold it to be a divine institution, not only in the sense that whoever enters the marriage state must do so according to God's ordinance; but also in the sense that, other things being equal, it is God's will that men choose matrimony rather than celibacy. Marriage accords better with our nature, and as being more natural it is naturally productive of good.

The idea of the superior sanctity of celibacy is a Manichean error that was adopted by some early Christians when Manicheism was a power in the world; and the Roman Church has, among its other follies, perpetuated this folly also, and has added this other erroneous supposition that the clergy are to be more holy than the laity. Hence the celibacy of the Romish priesthood—an error and a sin, as has been fully evinced by the corruptions, recorded in history, which have evidently issued directly from it.

Polygamy was not prohibited under the Mosaic law, but was most

distinctly discouraged. Christ says Moses allowed it because of the hardness of their hearts. That he himself and all his apostles disallowed it is evident from the fact that no Christian or Christian Church or council was ever known to sanction it; but on the contrary, with a unanimous voice, Christianity denounces it as a sin against God.

Divorce is an exception to that part of the law of marriage which requires that the union be for life. Two, and only two, causes are allowed by Scripture authority to annul the marriage contract—adultery and willful final desertion. The act of the civil authorities has no moral force either to make or unmake a marriage covenant. Its power is simply to recognize the legality of the contract and thereby determine legal questions of inheritance, etc.

The parties themselves make the contract; they only are competent to break it.

If either party commit adultery, or take final leave of the other, the union is severed; the injured party is morally at liberty to form another marriage connection; the guilty one God will judge. The supposition, that if for any cause a decision of the court can be obtained ordering the dissolution of the contract it is thereby dissolved, is fatally erroneous. Terrible distresses have come upon domestic circles which never would have come if the parties had felt themselves bound for life, with no release except by sins against God which peril eternal destiny; but they have come because divorces were easily obtainable from the courts, and the supposition has been indulged that the decree of the court was itself morally a release.

Marriages between near relatives are prohibited; universal humanity instinctively recognizes a propriety in the prohibition. Some affirm that the reason for the prohibition is that such marriages tend to deteriorate the race. More obvious reasons are found: First, in the manifest fact that the natural affection subsisting between near kin is incongruous with the special affection on which the marriage relation is founded; secondly, If sexual desire were lawful and considered proper between persons living on such terms of familiarity as subsist among near relatives, disastrous results, perfectly destructive of domestic peace and harmony, could not

fail to be of frequent occurrence.

Duties. That there are moral obligations binding upon parties while forming marriage contracts would seem sufficiently obvious from the many and vastly important interests involved. Perhaps these can not be very distinctly specified. A few suggestions, however, will indicate the matters to which these duties relate. Marriages contracted on love at first sight may sometimes chance to be fortunate, but the hazard is too great to be trusted; love founded on at least a tolerably thorough acquaintance is far more reliable. Love at first sight, indulged without restraint, is an effectual bar to that thorough acquaintance without which marriage should never be contracted. Cupid is said to be blind; but the less people worship a blind god the better will it be for them.

When an engagement has been made the parties should be known to be so engaged, that they themselves may the more readily cease from such intercourse with others as tends to excite affection, and that all others may cease from such intercourse with them. The ambition to surprise the community by an unexpected marriage is great folly; concealment in a matter of such import as the marriage relation is a great incongruity, If, after engagement, either or both are fully satisfied that their engagement was made under a misapprehension, so that marriage would not be a means of securing their mutual happiness, it is their duty to dissolve the connection. In this the woman is allowed a larger liberty than the man; or, rather, the man is bound to be the more scrupulous. When both parties are fully satisfied that the union proposed will be for their mutual good it is their duty to consummate it by the marriage ceremony. Short engagements are by far preferable.

*Husbands and Wives.* The law governing the married is the law of *special* love. The general law which requires all to love others as themselves does not meet the case. Here the man in loving his wife loves himself, and the woman in loving her husband loves herself. And reciprocally, he in loving himself loves her, and she in loving herself loves him. They are one; their interests are identified. The *meum* and the *tuum* has but a very limited application in a happy household. Separate purses, separate associations, social, literary, or religious avocations, disconnected with the welfare of the household, any diverse interests, are an obstruction to the natural

flow of matrimonial affection.

And yet, though the personality of the parties is mutually absorbed it is not destroyed; though in most respects they are one, yet in some regards they are two. Plainly this is so in matters of conscience; neither has the right to interfere with the other's religious convictions, but, contrariwise, is bound to yield all needful aids in assisting the other to live in obedience to the dictates of his own conscience.

Though one in most of life's concerns, yet individuality still exists, and differences of opinion and apparent differences of interests will sometimes arise. Here, if love be arbiter, no difficulty will appear; for each prefers the other's good to his own, and to yield will be no sacrifice, but rather a pleasure. But yet again, differences will arise where yielding will be a sacrifice of individual preference. What then? The Bible plainly answers this; and, as it seems to me, the nature of the case settles it as well, and in the same way. Both cannot have their preference. There is no majority in the case. Reference is impossible; for strangers must not meddle with such affairs. One must yield, must sacrifice preference, and submit to the other. Which shall do it? For many obvious reasons the man is the head of the household, and the woman cannot respect and love him as a husband unless she so regard him. She honors him, and in so doing respects herself by a cheerful and glad obedience. And in this there is no inferiority, no subjugation, but the contrary. It is obedience where obedience is naturally due, the most honorable and holy thing one rational being can render to another. How meagre and miserably supercilious the weakness that rejects the word "obey" from the marriage ceremony!

*Parents and Children.* "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes. And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Honor thy father and thy mother as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Honor thy father and

mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth."

The doctrine of rights has here an obvious application. The nature of the case furnishes a forcible as well as a beautiful illustration of the doctrine, and perhaps we may say a satisfactory and full demonstration of its truthfulness. The child comes into being in a condition of entire helplessness and dependence. The parents have the ability, as no one else has, to furnish the needed assistance. The mother especially, by the strength and intensity of the maternal affection—a principle implanted in her nature—is fitted to do for the child what no one else can ever do. This ability and disposition to secure for the child its greatest good is the ground of the parent's right to control the child, and co-relative is the obligation to do so for the child's well-being. While this state of things continues, the right and corresponding obligation continue; but, so soon as the child attains an ability to care for and provide for itself, this right and obligation cease. The duty of the parent requires him to provide for the child all that the physical, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, and religious wants of the child require so far forth as the parent can and the child cannot make the requisite provision. The character and extent of the education it is the parent's duty to provide for his child is thus determined by the child's requirements and the parent's ability. To educate all children alike, even though that education should lead some to the attainment of their highest possibility, would be a waste of resources as to many, and a positive detriment to not a few. Few parents, if any, are qualified to give their children a perfect education, and the best that most parents can do will be but an imperfect work. Physical, intellectual, and aesthetic training must be determined by the parent's condition in life and so far forth as possible by what may be reasonably anticipated as to the future of the child. For a poor man to train his children as he would if they were to inherit a fortune is, of course, a great folly; and for a rich man to train his for a life of entire dependence upon others, is not only a great folly but a positive sin.

To find the limit of parental control in matters of religion is with some a difficult problem. Beyond all question, the rights and obligations of the parent extend to the religious training of their children, and that with a very special emphasis. As religion is the child's highest interest, so is

religious training the parent's highest duty; they are to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This plainly extends to an authoritative control over those externals of religion which, in the judgment of the parent, tend to the proper education of our religious nature, such as the observance of the Sabbath, attendance upon family and public worship, the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures, and a total abstinence from profanity and other immoralities. But it is still asked, To what extent may a parent press upon the attention of his child the peculiarities of denominational Christianity? We answer, it is for the child's good in all things, religion not by any means excepted, that he follow the footsteps of his parents till he has what is, to his own mind, a good, a valid reason for doing otherwise—in the absence of a better reason the prejudices of education are man's best guide in all things. Therefore, the parent should teach his child all things whatsoever he himself judges is for the child's spiritual good, and insist upon external observances as far forth as is consistent with the child's personal responsibility. Religion is in itself a matter of the personality, and consists in the free choice of the individual, and, of course, cannot be interfered with. That there is danger here none can doubt; parents may so insist upon their own peculiar notions as to cause their children to revolt against all religion, and thus be the occasion of indescribable injury; but evidently looseness is a much more common error than rigor. The duty of parents to their children is most effectually performed by the same method as that by which more, than by any other, each one does his duty to his fellow-man; namely, by *being himself what he ought to be*. Example is more eloquent than speech; and character, though speaking without a voice, is more eloquent than all beside. Without good character all else is no better than sounding brass. The duties having special reference to the relation of parents and children may be summarized on the part of parents as maintenance and education; and on the part of children as reverence and obedience. Maintenance during the helplessness of childhood, education as required by the child's wants to the extent of the parents' ability; reverence always and obedience during minority—matters of conscience only excepted.

*Masters and Servants.*—In a sense, we are to call no man master—one is our master, even Christ; that is, we are always to obey God rather than

man, and the reverence or worship due to God is not to be rendered to any other being. In the sense of domestic slavery, no man is the master of another, and yet, where the institution of slavery is legalized, the relation will exist and special duties will arise. Again, the relation of master and servant may be, and often must be, voluntarily entered by contract between the parties.

We limit ourselves to a few observations respecting the duties of each in the latter case. Of course both parties are morally bound to fulfill the contract, unless the contract itself be immoral or a contract to do an immoral act, and to fulfill it to the letter in the precise sense in which each understood the other to accept it. But the relation of master and servant, though a voluntary one, often is and must be a relation of superior and inferior, of power and dependence, and because of this, duty is not unfrequently difficult and delicate. As a man has no right to make a contract that will be subversive of his own or his neighbor's rights, he certainly has no right with or without such a contract, because his neighbor having become his servant is in his power, to require him to do that which is destructive of the servant's best good.

Of the relations and duties of employers and employees I shall say a few words further on. I now speak of servants employed in and about a man's household. To require a service which is an effectual bar to the servant's physical health, mental growth, and religious culture, is to deprive a fellow-creature of natural rights. To place upon a man the burden of a brute, or to require what is beneath the dignity of a man, or to demand a useless service, merely to keep servants employed, or to prevent them from enjoying rest and recreation, is tyrannical and subversive of all good. To oppress the hireling in his wages, to fail to pay the full amount on time, is a sin against which the Scriptures utter unqualified denunciation. The duties of servants are too minute and numerous for accurate specification in a contract, hence they are employed to do the master's will, and within the natural and obvious limits above hinted they are bound to obey their master's orders; to do the master's will rather than their own, where the two are in conflict. In case of unjust and tyrannical masters, matters of conscience excepted, the Scriptures teach that for Christ's sake, not because it is due the masters themselves, the servant, while he is a servant, should be obedient; that is, as I understand

it, the servant may never assume to be the master—the master's will is law while the relation of master and servant exists.

## 9.4.4. CIVIL DUTIES

*Civil Government.*—What is intended when it is said that civil government is a divine institution? Plainly that it is God's will that such institutions should exist; he prefers their existence to their non-existence. He has not left this matter to human option, in any such sense as that man may or may not form such associations, and in either case be equally acceptable and well pleasing to God. Civil government is not a voluntary association, like a literary society, a bank, or a railroad company. How is the divine will in this case indicated? First, by the written Word. "The powers that be are ordained of God; the power is the minister of God to thee for good." Secondly, by the constitution of things, or rather by what man is by creation and by the circumstances of his earthly life. Man is, by nature, a social being; he was created for society; without society he cannot subsist; his condition is a condition of mutual dependence; in some portions of his life he is absolutely dependent for the continuance of his life—at all times he is dependent for the security of his greatest good. God has endowed man with certain inalienable rights, but man has not the power to secure these rights by himself alone, and when deprived of them he has no power to redress his wrongs. Hence the necessity of government for the protection of life, liberty, property, character, and reputation.

The affirmation that "the powers that be are ordained of God" is not an affirmation that the form of the government and the *personnel* of the administration are always divinely appointed. And yet divine providence, without doubt, has much to do with these things; for it is by the divine wisdom "that kings rule and princes decree justice. Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south; but God is the judge; he putteth down one and setteth up another." Human wisdom is not competent to draw the line between the natural and the supernatural, between human agency and divine sovereignty; but it is competent to see both clearly manifest in the same thing, so that we may

distinctly recognize a divine providence in disposing of the dynasties that succeed each other in the earth, and at the same time recognize the agency of man in determining to some extent what shall be and what shall not be. And the histories of the governments that are, and of those that have been, clearly evince that the consent of the governed is a large element in civil affairs. It is not true that governments "derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," in the sense that the consent of the governed is sole source of power or the chief source. Eminently and emphatically "the powers that be are ordained of God;" but yet it is true that the form of the government, whether monarchial or republican or otherwise, and the *personnel* of the administration, whether this, that, or the other man be king or emperor, is largely determined by the consent of the governed, and it is evident that God designed that so it should be. It is of the divine will that men have in respect to these things a large liberty of choice.

By what principles ought men to govern themselves in determining the forms of government, and in selecting their rulers? Unanimity is impossible.

That among equals wisdom is with the minority is self-contradictory; majorities must rule. But since before a majority a minority is defenseless, constitutional law is established to determine the limits within which majorities may and beyond which they may not coerce the minority, and law applies equally to all the individual subjects of government, irrespective of the party to which the individual belongs.

The form of the government is discretionary, and may be determined by the condition of the society for which it is organized. Republics require a larger amount of intelligence and a higher standard of morals among the people than monarchies. Hereditary governments are more stable than those that are elective, but the probability of an imbecile administration is greater in the former than in the latter.

To whom does the right of suffrage belong? It belongs to none by natural right. It must be bestowed by convention, and should be bestowed upon such as are best qualified to use it. The doctrine that, since government is for the people, it should be by the people, cannot be applied without some

limitation. Children, the sick, the infirm, the insane, criminals, and absentees cannot vote; some must vote for others. The doctrine that the family is the unit of the state, and that therefore heads of families are the proper representatives, is also inapplicable, because frequently persons not heads of families have larger interests in the government and are better qualified to administer its affairs than many that are heads of families. In a matter where interests so multifarious, and frequently conflicting interests, are involved, no perfectly equitable arrangement is possible. With a large margin for variation, as changes in the conditions and circumstances of society may require, general principles must determine upon whom the right of suffrage is conferred. As the present writer sees it, intelligence, at least common morality, sympathy with the government, and ability to meet governmental responsibilities, are essential qualifications. A voter should be twenty one years of age, should have at least a common-school education, should not be a criminal before the law, should be a citizen either by birth or by naturalization after a competent number of years of residence among the people, should pay taxes, should be qualified to serve the government as a juror, legislator, soldier, or in some other way, as the exigencies of the government might require. It would seem that justice requires a further discrimination. It would seem that the soldier, who must fight if war exist, ought to have greater power in determining the question of war than the ordinary citizen, who may remain at home; but the history of the world seems to indicate that this is either impossible or inexpedient. Again, it would seem that a man who has large property to be protected should have a voice in governmental affairs where he who has no property need not have a voice.

This, however, may be provided for by a property representation in the legislature probably better than by a property qualification in the voter.

Again, it would seem that women having property in their own right, and required to pay taxes, ought in some way to be represented in property legislation. Perhaps they ought; and yet the difficulty of special legislation to meet such specific cases may be adequate reason for disallowing the representation required.

Why is not the right of suffrage conferred on women? Perhaps it may

here be said—not as an answer to the question, but as the statement of a fact—

that by far, very far, the larger number of women in the world, and by far, very far, the larger number in any part of the world, would regard it as a very unwelcome responsibility should the law of the land require them to vote, and to mingle with governmental affairs in the many other ways which voting implies. But to our answer to the question. The physical constitution their Creator gave them disqualifies them for service as policemen, sheriffs, soldiers, and for many other duties required by the government. Again, the duties of the home, to which by nature they are called, are sufficient to occupy them wholly, and are so incongruous with political affairs that any attempt to mingle them must issue in a neglect of one or the other, or both.

Again, public taste and sentiment being what it now is, if the women of the land should vote, take the rostrum and harangue public assemblies on political questions, become candidates for public offices, manipulate and maneuver as politicians—in a word, do what voting implies—it would be an effectual laying aside of their womanhood; it would dismantle them of many of those amiable qualities which now constitute their chief power over husbands and children; it would tend to annihilate the home, and to banish from social life its courtesies.

What are the functions of government? To do for the individual good, and through the individual for the general good, what without government cannot be done. This includes the protection and security of natural rights—the rights to life, liberty, property, character, and reputation; and in case of violation of these rights it requires that individual and public wrongs be redressed. The ability of the government to do these things as they cannot be done without government constitutes its right to govern—or, if it please better, constitutes the reason, as we may suppose, why the divine wisdom has ordained that governments shall be. These functions so obviously belong to the powers that be that we may pass them without further remark. But the civil authority may promote the private and public welfare of its citizens in other ways. It may encourage industries, arts, science, literature, promote morals and religion, in all ways for the public good, provided it can do so, in cases where neither the individual

citizen can by himself alone, nor any number of citizens by voluntary associations do those things for themselves.

For the encouragement of art, science, and literature a monopoly of their products is given by patent laws and copyrights to inventors and authors; for the encouragement of industries acts of incorporation granting legal privileges are issued, by which capital is aggregated, machinery employed, and a division of labor adopted greatly for the public good, a result which could not be without legal authority.

But, it is asked, can law do anything for morals and religion? Of course, the inquirer does not ask whether man may be punished for immoralities —this is taken for granted—but may government do anything to promote morals and religion? Not directly, for men are not made morally good by force or power. But indirectly, by diffusing knowledge, establishing schools, teaching the truth in many ways that are above private means and the means of voluntary associations, it may contribute greatly to the moral and religious well-being of its subject. Some Christian nations affirm that it is the duty of the State to support the Church; but the facts of history prove that the Church can be better supported by the voluntary contributions of its members than by taxations levied by the State. I repeat, the State is not called to do what the subject may do for himself. May not temperance laws be enacted? not for the promotion of temperance, but for the prevention of crime.

The State may enact prohibitory laws, because the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks tend directly to the production of crimes, pauperisms, cruelties, and an almost endless catalogue of evils. Self-preservation here gives the right of prohibition.

*Duties of Magistrates and Citizens:*—Either because the necessities of the case require it or because it is obviously expedient, government is usually divided into three departments, legislative, judiciary, and executive.

The legislature enacts the laws, the judiciary explains and applies them, the executive executes them. These are distinct from each other—the executive, however, usually has the power of a veto on the acts of the legislature, and is, therefore, so far forth a branch of that department. The judiciary is, in some States, appointed by the executive, and in others

elected by the people; but their appointment makes no difference as to their functions or responsibility. The legislative department is divided into upper and lower house, called in the United States, Senate and House of Representatives. It has been sometimes thought that the lower house represents the people and the upper the capital of the country; and, again, that the one represents the common people and the other the aristocracy; but neither of these is, either in theory or practice, true. The two houses are co-ordinate, and operate merely as mutual checks; the joint action of both bodies, acting separately, being required, is a healthy check upon hasty legislation.

The duty of officers of government has respect first to their own qualifications for the office they hold. They are to acquaint themselves thoroughly with constitutional and common law, and very generally with the specific laws of the country they serve; they are to know well the character habits, and wants of the people; their possibilities and those of the land they inhabit. Being well informed, they are, secondly, to do, according to their best judgment, what is for the good of the whole people, without fear or favor. The representative of a given State may not do what is for the advantage of his immediate constituents to the detriment of the whole people; he is an official, not for those who elected him, but for the whole people; he is bound to do, not what accords with the wishes of his constituents, but what, in his own judgment, is best for the whole. If he were elected on an issue judged of by the people, because he was known to be of their opinion, and before the time of action came his judgment in the case is changed, a proper respect for the opinions of the people, as well as regard for his own implied pledge, would make it proper for him to resign; but if the issue arose after his election, he ought not to resign, though he knows that his constituents differ with him in opinion. In no case ought a legislator or judge to do what, in his judgment, ought not to be done. Executive officers, sheriffs, soldiers, policemen, are appointed to obey orders; they are not supposed to have an opinion; they are not responsible for their judgment of what ought to be; but for their efficiency and faithfulness in executing the laws as they exist. The citizen is bound to obey all the laws of the land, matters of conscience only excepted, to pay his taxes promptly, and hold himself in readiness to render any personal service the common weal may require.

If the law require what conscience forbids, he must disregard the law and submissively accept the penalty.

*Employers and Employees—Principals and Agents.*—Under the head of domestic duties we made a few remarks referring to the duties of masters and servants, having special reference to servants employed in and about the homestead.

Above, under the head of civil duties, reference has been made to the duties of magistrates, considered as agents employed by society. There are a few general considerations involved in the relations of principals and agents deserving notice, and not as yet receiving it, which may be introduced in this connection as well as any. Agencies are of two kinds; in the one the agent is employed to do the will of his employer; to this class belong all common laborers, and most, if not all, operatives in agricultural and mechanical pursuits: in the other, the agent is employed to secure an end desired by his principal, but is left to his own option as to the means by which to attain the end proposed. To this class belong all professional agents, of whatever kind; agents employed because they are supposed to have a knowledge and skill for effecting the end desired, that their employers do not possess. Physicians are not employed to give the medicine the patient may prefer, but to administer what, in his judgment, will remove disease and promote health. For convenience we designate all principals and employers, of whatever class, by the general term employers, and all agents and laborers by the term operatives.

The employer is under obligation to make an equitable division of the profits of labor, and pay his operatives their full share of such profits. In general, this requires that labor of all kinds be sufficiently remunerative to enable the operative to secure all the ends that properly belong to his normal relations in life. Is he the head of a family, his wages must be adequate to the maintenance and education of his children; he must have wherewith to give all the members of his household what advantages for culture their natures require. I say in general, and by this qualification I mean that the rule indicates a general principle in theory, and not a dead level in practice, for some employments are, and for all that appears to the contrary must be, more remunerative than others. When an employer, totally unmindful of the good of his operatives and the good of

their families, adopts as his motto for business, the largest possible amount of the best possible work for the least possible wages, to the extent of his power he will be an oppressor—"a hard master, reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strewed." It is obviously morally binding upon all employers to seek, and, so far as possible, to provide for, the greatest good of those in their employ with all dependent upon them.

Frequently, especially in large cities, this obligation is practically violated, where the fault is mostly, if not entirely, chargeable upon the operative. Some products may be very cheaply manufactured by labor-saving machinery, or persons of leisure not dependent on daily toil for a sustenance may, as a pastime, perform certain kinds of work for a small remuneration.

Such products are always sold for a price that will not allow the manufacturer to pay for their production, by hand labor, wages sufficient for the adequate livelihood or the operative; yet multitudes hang about large cities and entreat, beg, and beseech manufacturers to give them this very kind of work; and taking it they rise early, sit up late, work hard every day, and not unfrequently stitch, stitch the livelong night for a pittance merely sufficient to perpetuate for a brief life a most miserable existence; hence come strikes, labor riots, and wholesale denunciation of capitalists, of capital and of labor-saving machinery. Now, if laborers insist upon living where there is no labor to be done or none that they can do, or if they insist upon doing a kind of work for which there is no demand, I see not to the contrary but that the consequences belong to them and to no one else. If a young girl who is competent to do house work, and is wanted at remunerative wages, prefers to stich on shop-work at starvation prices, and persists in doing so, whom shall she blame when want and sickness and sorrows come? Let laborers be content to be employed at work for which they are competent, and for which there is a demand; if there is no demand where they are, let them go where there is; let them do such work faithfully and well, and, as a rule, they will surely receive adequate remuneration—the laborer is worthy of his hire, and under Providence he will be quite certain to receive it. As a rule, when he receives that for which he agreed to labor it is his duty to be content; but whatever oppression may come to him from, as he judges, a

maladjustment of the relations of capital and labor, no good can come from the use of violence, or from attempts to coerce capitalists; strikes and labor riots are worse than follies—they are sins.

# CHAPTER 10: DUTIES TO GOD, OR PIETY.

Is there any such thing as morality without religion? The answer to this question depends upon definitions. If by the term morality nothing more is meant than external conduct, and that is called morally good which has a beneficial effect, then the answer is affirmative, and there is no room for controversy or discussion. Beyond question, there is such a thing as automatic excellence, which may exist where there is no moral desert. A watch, a knife, may be good in this sense; and a man may perform an act by pure accident which may produce beneficial results. If the term morality is made to include the motive, and that is called morally good which is done with a good motive, then the question may assume this form: May an act be morally acceptable which is prompted by a good but a subordinate motive, without any reference to a supreme end, and entirely irrespective of authority or of God?

We answer: On the supposition—if the supposition is admissible that the agent does not know, and is not responsible for his ignorance, of any higher motive than that which prompted him, then he is both morally good and religious in the highest sense he is capable of being; but all will agree that his morality is very defective, and his religion well-nigh a nullity. Nothing valuable either in philosophy or religion can be deduced from such a case. If morality is made to include the supreme end, and is determined by the end chosen as supreme, then there is no morality without religion; or perhaps it is better to say a perfect morality and religion are the same thing. But it will be asked, May we not define morality as the duties we owe to men, and religion as the duties we owe to God, and then say a man may be moral and not religious? Not if his governing motive determines his character.

But if a man may be moral and not religious, he cannot be religious and not moral. If we love not him whom we have seen we cannot love Him whom we have not seen. If we bring a gift to the altar, and remember that our brother has aught against us, we must first be reconciled to our

brother, and then we may come and offer our gift. In this sense religion is conditioned upon morality, and according to all analogies is therefore higher; but it does not follow that the two are separable, and that morality is first in the order of time. Though judging from appearances we would naturally say that the sense of obligation to our fellow-men is developed earlier in life than the sense of obligation to God, yet it cannot be affirmed that it is so. Contrariwise, it may be reasonably inferred from man's religious nature that the intuitive sense of dependence, which is the occasion on which the sense of obligation arises, has respect to a superior power, is a recognition of God, is the occasion of the mind's earliest intuitive apprehension of supreme power and infinite being. If this be so there can be no form of duty without some reference to God.

We have said above that a perfect morality and religion are the same thing. This requires some qualification or explanation. It is not identically the same thing to say to good, Be thou my God as to say, O God, be thou my good; and yet a full apprehension of what is meant and implied being supposed, the two forms of expression would be exponential of the same state of mind. The same thing may be said of unreserved submission to the will of God, entire consecration to the service of God. When a man adopts the will of God as his law—or, in other words, when he purposes universal obedience to the divine commandments—he may do so in view of the good, which the will of God seeks, which the commandments secure, which constitutes the reason why the will of God is what it is, and why the commandments are what they are; or he may do so simply and solely because God has commanded. In the former case his submission to God's will is a rational acceptance of the highest motive; in the latter it is a trusting acceptance of lawful authority. The first is a recognition of the righteousness of the law itself; the other, a recognition of the right of the lawgiver to command. In both it is a recognition of the obligation to obey. When perfect they are nothing more than different phases of the same state of mind. The former is specially exponential of loyalty to law; and the latter of loyalty to the giver of the law. The one may be considered a higher style of virtue; but the other must be regarded as a better test of loyalty to the person of the sovereign. Whatever view be taken of it, it is eminently that that all his creatures owe to God. It is the first great duty, and is in its nature such that it involves all duty. Our duties to ourselves

and our duties to our fellow-men are duties to God.

But there are duties which have special reference to God, and these are usually spoken of as, I. The Cultivation of a Devotional Spirit; II. Prayer; and, III. The Observance of the Sabbath.

## **10.1. THE CULTIVATION OF A DEVOTIONAL SPIRIT.**

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Man has another life besides his natural physical life; it is a higher life, the life of the spirit, or spiritual life. This is sustained by other food than material bread, by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. "To know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is eternal life." The knowledge of God is the life of the soul, or is the means by which soul life is nourished and sustained. Words are the media of thoughts, channels for the communication of ideas. Every method by which God makes himself known to his creatures is a word of God. Chiefly these may be classified as nature, providence, and revelation—the divine works, ways, and words. To cultivate a devotional spirit, to seek communion with God, is to use those means of acquiring a knowledge of him which he has placed in our power. It is, first, to study his works specially with a view to find out his thoughts. The mere naturalist is content to ascertain facts and observe second causes; the devout man looks beyond these in search of first cause, of purpose, or intentional design, of wisdom, of power, and of goodness. "I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks; unto thee do we give thanks; for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Secondly, a devotional spirit is cultivated by studying God in his providence or his ways. The mere historian, like the naturalist, looks wholly at events and the connection of successive events; but the devout observer of the things that are done under the sun constantly inquires after the purposes of

God. Why, for what purpose, with what intent, did he do this, or permit his creatures to do it? is the pious man's inquiry in all the events that interest him. He is constantly searching that he may find out God; he is feeling after him, if haply he may find him. Clouds and darkness are round about him, but enough of his ways may be known to assure us that righteousness is the habitation of his throne. Now we see but in a glass darkly; but the perfection of our nature requires that we see him face to face, and a devotional spirit tends towards that perfection with all possible speed. His wisdom is unsearchable, and his ways past finding out; but we may know his ways in part, and by such knowledge come to love and adore. He doeth his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; it is his glory to conceal a matter, and yet the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. They that seek him shall find him; and to him that knocketh the door shall be opened into a saving knowledge of his will. "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment." To his friends God makes known the secret of his ways. "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Thirdly, a devotional spirit is most directly and effectually cultivated by searching in the Scriptures to find God; to learn his nature, his attributes, his thoughts, mind, and will. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates.

Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. We have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto we

do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Dr. Wayland remarks, in substance, that to study God in the light of nature and providence is like learning the laws of light with our backs to the sun; by observing the phenomena of reflected rays much valuable information may be obtained; but to study the divine character as revealed in the Word of God, is to study optics with one's face to the sun, observing the phenomena of direct rays, by which knowledge may be gained incomparably more certain and incalculably superior. Fourthly, a devotional spirit is cultivated by the exercise of devotion. As all our faculties are improved by proper use, and weakened by abuse or disuse, so the ability to find God by searching, and to hold communion with him when found, is acquired and strengthened by exercise, by actual converse with him in meditation, in reading the inspired Word, and in prayer.

## 10.2. PRAYER.

Prayer, in its most specific sense, is paramount desire. When one desires any object more than anything and everything else that would be a bar to the possession of that object, he prays for it. The desire is itself prayer, whether expressed or unexpressed, whether existing in conscious or unconscious thought. When prayer is considered in this sense, its form is entirely non-essential. The term is, however, more commonly used in a more extended sense, and includes all acts of worship. In this signification it is the soul's communion with God—the spirit of man in intercourse with the invisible spirit of God. It is the outgoings of the soul in ineffable adoration and complacent love towards a being possessed of all possible perfections in an infinite degree—the soul's outgoings in ascriptions of praise and thanksgiving for the innumerable benefits of being and its blessings, especially for the unspeakable grace and mercy of redemption, pardon, and salvation through the merits and atonement of deity, incarnated in the person of God's Son—the soul's outgoings in supplications and intercessions for the well-being and happiness of all mankind through the work and office of God's Holy Spirit and through gracious interferences of an all-pervading and overruling Providence. This is prayer. Can any sane man suggest that such a service is a

superstition? On the contrary, will not all well-disposed persons at once, from the very nature of prayer itself, regard it as at the same time both an exalted privilege and a most rational duty?

The rationalist readily concedes that it is reasonable and right in itself that excellence should be admired; that supreme excellence should even be adored; that the recipient of blessings should be grateful; and that the dependent should ask for the favors he needs; and hence it is conceded that prayer is so far forth a rational exercise, and is useful in its reflex influence upon him that prays; but it is said that adoration and gratitude can in no way affect the infinite and the absolute, so that to suppose it makes any difference with the Almighty whether worship be offered him or be withheld is simply to make a very silly supposition; and especially to suppose that the asking of blessings at the hand of him who is infinite, absolute, and immutable will make any difference in his bestowments is self-contradictory, as it supposes that there are changes in the unchangeable. Now all this assumes to affirm of the infinite, absolute, and immutable what no finite mind is authorized to affirm, for, whatever the infinite may be it is not competent to affirm that it is such as renders the co-existence of free will impossible.

Free will exists in fact; it exists in man, and must exist in God. There is nothing self-contradictory, and nothing inconsistent with the infinite, so far as finite thought is able to assert, in the affirmation that the immutable God immutably answers prayer. But it is said law governs all events, and law is uniform. Law, so far as it applies to events, is a form of expression denoting an order of sequence, or the succession of the conditioning and the conditioned; in other words, it is an affirmation that if this is, that will be. Now we affirm that the law, If ye ask, ye shall receive; or, He that asketh, receiveth, is as much a law, and is as uniform, as any other law. But it is still objected that law is force acting uniformly. It is so, but force acts uniformly to an *intelligent* end, and therefore has its origin in volition. Since force originates in volition it must be manifest that infinite will is competent to keep all force in constant control. The existence of force in the universe is, then, no bar to the idea that the law of the conditioned prevails extensively, and may even govern all events. God can then (may the philosophers who compel us to use such language be forgiven!) God can then suspend the reception of his blessings on such

conditions as he may choose; he may ordain that he who asks shall receive; shall receive what he would not receive if he did not ask. Rationalism aside, let us to the law and the testimony. Whatever philosophy teaches on the subject, the Scriptures teach that "men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Pray without ceasing, continue in prayer and watch in the same, with thanksgiving. I will, therefore, that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. After this manner, therefore, pray ye, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

We have said prayer is worship. Acceptable worship implies all those states of mind that make up right-mindedness towards God: such as penitence for our sins; a fixed purpose of amendment and of universal obedience to the divine commandments; an intense desire for spiritual blessings, or heavenly mindedness; a profound reverence for the divine character; an unreserved submission to the divine will; unshaken confidence in his veracity, or trust in his promises; gratitude for blessings received; an unreserved forgiveness of all who trespass against us, and peace with all mankind. While prayer implies these states of mind, it is itself a specifically paramount desire for the blessings sought. Being thus, in its essential nature, a mental state, its outward expression has no importance beyond the idea of suitableness. But evidently there is here a matter of interest. If a mortal man may appear in the divine presence, and be permitted to speak to deity, to address the king eternal as a man speaks to his fellow-man, surely it is of some importance that the form and manner of the address be appropriate to the relations subsisting between man and his Maker, and to the ends and purposes for which the privilege of intercourse with God is permitted. But evidently no rules can

be prescribed and learned and practiced as rules or directions to be observed by him who draws near to God. Real worship existing in the mind will naturally seek and employ its appropriate expression; and whatever influences present surroundings should or may have in any given case, a pious mind will readily apprehend. He that prays without ceasing, prays in all actual, and if the actual equals the possible, in all possible positions of the body, circumstances dictating the position at any particular time and place. Not without cause does the common apprehension recognize kneeling as the most suitable posture, when circumstances correspond; but if anyone supposes he cannot pray unless he kneel, he evinces more of subserviency to custom than of intelligent piety or cultured taste. Under some circumstances, kneeling is exponential, more of sluggishness than of devotion.

If the question be asked whether prayers should be extempore or liturgical, the Scripture answer would be, They may be either. Our Lord taught his disciples a form of prayer. So much for liturgy. But he and the apostles, and the whole Church under their authority, also used extempore prayer. If it be asked when the one is to be used, and when the other, the Scriptures furnish no answer; indicating thereby that this is left to the judgment of him that prays. The idea that the worshiper, by using a ritual, necessarily falls into formality, that for worship to be in spirit and truth it must of necessity be extempore, is evidently a superstition; for no one would say that hymns of praise, sung by the congregation, are necessarily formal because the poetry and the music were prepared for them beforehand. If a written hymn, set to music, may be sung with the spirit and with the understanding, so also may a written prayer be pronounced or recited in spirit and in truth. On the other hand, it is equally superstitious to affirm that all extempore prayer is fanatical, or unsuitable for the solemnity and dignity of divine worship; for with however much previous study and preparation, and with however much of help from the superior talents of others, we may approach the divine presence, it is manifest that no offering we can bring will in itself comport with the majesty of him whose presence we bow. If man finds access to God, and holds communion with his Maker, the Spirit divine must help his infirmities; the blood of the covenant must give him access. His own poor words, be they the best possible, are as nothing.

Prayer, considered as to its external form—the external form being always prompted by, and exponential of, the internal spirit—and regarded as a duty owed to God, may be distinguished into private, domestic, and social prayer.

That it is man's duty to his Maker to enter his closet, shut to the door, place himself in a devotional posture, form his thoughts in modes of worship, and express his thoughts in words, is plainly taught in the Holy Scriptures, and it is also positively affirmed that he that does this will be rewarded openly; that is, he will receive blessings which he would not receive if he did not thus pray: to God. Private prayer is also obviously commended by the natural and gracious relations subsisting between man and his Maker.

Man is a being endowed with powers to know, love, serve, and enjoy God; he has his being and his blessings from God; he has sinned against God, but has been graciously redeemed, and may be restored to the divine favor. God is a being possessed of infinite perfections; he has created man, and has redeemed him by the precious death of his incarnate Son; he preserves man constantly by his power, and blesses him with all things needful for his good. These relations indicate most emphatically the propriety of uninterrupted intercourse between God and man, and at the same time make it man's highest privilege and most imperative duty to cultivate this intercourse by such acts of special worship as private prayer implies.

The relations of the family to God, and the relations of the head of the household to those dependent upon him, indicate that domestic worship is not only an appropriate exercise, but also a solemn duty binding upon the heads of families. Under the patriarchal dispensation the father of the family was the divinely appointed priest, whose duty it was to offer daily sacrifices in the name of the family and in their behalf, and in no subsequent dispensation is this office abolished; the sacrifice is changed, but the service remains.

Nothing is more useful, religiously, than that the obligations of religion be associated with the endearments of home. No associations are more powerful restraints from vice, or more powerful stimulants to virtue, than

those connected with the devotions of the family circle.

The same things may be said of public worship that we have said of private and domestic devotion. It is God's will that the people forsake not the assembling of themselves together; but that they meet at stated and appointed times, to hear the Word of God read and expounded, and to unite their hearts and voices in praise and prayer, with thanksgivings and intercessions. Social blessings demand social praise; public sins require public humiliation, confession, and contrition; and social dependence should lead to social supplications and intercessions.

## 10.3. THE SABBATH.

“Thus the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day. Keep the seventh day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember thou that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant: it is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever. Six days shall work be done; but on the Sabbath there shall be to you a holy day, a Sabbath of

rest to the Lord.

Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn, and his disciples were a-hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. The Pharisees said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day.

But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was a-hungered, and they that were with him? If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached, ready to depart on the morrow. Upon the first day of the week let everyone lay by him in store as the Lord has prospered him. I was in the spirit on the Lord's day."

That the Sabbath was made for man—that is, that it is an institution ordained for man's good—is evidenced by its effects upon his physical nature.

He will enjoy better health, be stronger, and perform more labor by resting one day in seven than if he practice continuous toil. This has been satisfactorily determined by careful observation; and the same thing has been found to be true of beasts of burden. The induction has been so extensive, and the result so uniform, that the argument amounts to demonstration. Man and beast require rest, and the ordinary daily rest is not sufficient to meet this demand of nature. Natural consequences, therefore, indicate that the Sabbath has the sanction—or, rather, is an appointment—of him who established the present order of things. But as there is no other natural indication that the Sabbath is an institution of divine appointment, especially as there is nothing to indicate that one-seventh of time rather than one-sixth or one-eighth is demanded for rest, the institution is regarded as one of positive rather than of moral law, and as having its reason or ground of obligation wholly in revelation.

The Scriptures above quoted express or imply most, if not all, of the general facts and underlying principles involved in the Bible testimony on the subject.

They teach first, that the Sabbath was instituted at the time of the creation. It matters not what may have been the length of the days of creation; they may have been geological periods of indefinite length. Whatever they were the plain affirmation is, that when the earth was prepared as a habitation for man, God created man and then ceased, in some sense, from the work of creation; or, as it is said, "God rested from all his work he had created and made"—and because he so rested, he then ordained that his creatures should do likewise; that through all time, after six days of toil they should take one day of rest.

The record in Genesis teaches, secondly, that the Sabbath is not only a season of respite from toil, a time of rest, but also is eminently a religious institution. God sanctified the day; that is, he set it apart for holy purposes.

Thirdly, the fact that the Sabbath was instituted at that time, and for a religious purpose, plainly indicates that it is monumental in its nature and design. It is designed and adapted to perpetuate among all peoples, by whom it is observed, the memory of the creation. It is a monument, bearing witness to all beholders that this material universe is the product of a special creation; was brought into being by the will and power of an extra-mundane personal First Cause—eternal, independent; all-powerful, and infinite in wisdom and goodness. The Sabbath, then, proclaims an infinite, personal Creator.

Fourthly, this same record in Genesis teaches what Christ repeated, that the Sabbath was made for man; that is, for man as man, and is therefore an institution for all times and for all peoples—never to be abrogated, never to be superseded. The only objection to this view worthy of notice, in this connection, is made by those who affirm that the Sabbath is a Mosaic institution. The reason given is, that there is not sufficient evidence of its existence prior to the time of Moses to warrant the affirmation that it did exist. The record in Genesis, they say, was made by Moses in anticipation, is an anachronism, a prolepsis. The common answers to this objection are, to our thought, decisive. The absence of any extended notice of the Sabbath in such a history as the one we have of times antecedent to Moses is determinative of nothing—so brief a history could not record everything. An hebdomadal division of time prevailed

extensively among the nations of antiquity, a fact wholly unaccounted for and unaccountable on any other supposition than that the Sabbath was instituted in the beginning. It may be admitted that during the bondage in Egypt the Sabbath had fallen into very general disuse or neglect; but that it was unknown, is plainly contradicted by the record concerning the falling and gathering of the manna on the sixth day, and its absence on the seventh. The Sabbath is here spoken of as an institution well known, and this was previous to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai.

The Scriptures above quoted teach, fifthly, that the law of the Sabbath was re-enacted by Moses with an additional purpose and intent, and with an additional reason for its observance; its violation was, at the same time, by the civil code, made punishable with death. Besides being a monument to the glory of the Creator, the Sabbath was now made a sign or seal of the covenant between God and his people. It was, on the part of the Israelites, an oath of allegiance to the Lord their God, a pledge of perpetual obedience to his commandments; and, on the part of God, it was a seal to his promises of blessings made to the children of Israel, as peculiarly his people. The special and new reason now urged as a motive to the observance of the Sabbath was their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. "Remember that thou wast a servant in Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out; therefore, the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day." Moreover, the observance of the Sabbath was appointed to be a distinguishing mark between the Israelites and other peoples; and as such the civil authority made the violation of the Sabbath law a capital offense. When it is assumed that the law of the Sabbath was first instituted by Moses, and is therefore wholly a Jewish institution, it is inferred that with the abrogation of the Jewish polity this law passed away and ceased to be binding. What pertained to the Sabbath that was peculiarly Jewish did pass away with the termination of the Jewish economy; the sacramental character of the institution ceased; it was no longer a sign between God and Israel; the deliverance from Egypt was no longer a reason for its observance; its desecration was no longer a capital offense; but the obligation imposed by its original institution and the monumental character of its purpose and intent remained. Further, the fact, that the Sabbath law is one among the ten commandments, is proof positive that it is not of the nature of a ceremonial law, and does not

belong to that part of the Mosaic code which pertained wholly to the Jewish people. The question is frequently asked, Does the Sabbath law belong to the moral code? If the question refers to the distinction between moral and ceremonial law we have just said that it does, and that the fact that it stands among the ten commandments is sufficient reason for the affirmation. If the question refers to the distinction between moral and positive law, and be asked with a view to determine whether the law be obligatory, we answer: The question is nugatory, for whether the Sabbath law be positive or moral, while it is a law it obligates the conscience by all the authority of the law-giver: "He that is guilty of one is guilty of all;"

that is, the transgression of anyone law is a disregard of the authority by which the whole code is enacted and sustained. Moral law, as it is sometimes distinguished from positive, is law whose reason is obvious; so that the subject knows why it was enacted: positive law, according to this distinction, is such that the subject sees no reason for obedience beyond the authority of the law-giver. In the light of this distinction we should place the Sabbath law in the category of moral laws. Of course, the reasons why the law says, Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy, are not so obvious as are the reasons why the law says, Thou shalt not kill; and yet, in the benefits accruing from rest and religious devotions, all may see good reason why the law should be observed. But the term moral code has sometimes another meaning. In the sense now in view, a moral law is one whose reason is found in the unchangeable nature of things, so that the law is one and the same forever; binding alike, at all times and upon all persons; and a positive law is one whose reason is found in peculiar and changeable circumstances, so that the circumstances changing the law changes, and may be binding at some times and not at other times, upon some persons and not upon other persons. If this distinction be limited to laws that pertain to the actual of human life, it does not differ from the distinction between moral and ceremonial law, and we have answered above; if it be between the eternal and the temporal, the question may be too metaphysical for definite answer, but probably most persons would agree that the Sabbath law does not belong to the category of laws that are binding by an eternal necessity—if there be any such laws. As we see it, the question under consideration, namely, Does the Sabbath law belong to the moral code? has no significance of

any importance except it assume, in substance, the following form: The existence of such beings as men are, under such relations and circumstances as those under which men exist, being presupposed, would such a law as the Sabbath law be always and everywhere morally binding? and we answer, yes, because such a law would be essential to the highest good of such beings under such relations and circumstances.

Sixthly, the Bible doctrine of the Sabbath teaches that, in the time of Christ, the interpretation of the Sabbath law had been corrupted by Pharisaical exactions, that innocent and virtuous acts were denounced as desecration of the Sabbath, and that the Savior's teachings on this subject were mostly, if not entirely, corrections of these errors. Nothing approaching even the appearance of all abrogation of the Mosaic law can be found in the teachings of Christ. He taught that works of necessity, such as preparing necessary food, and works of mercy, such as healing the sick, were not desecrations of the Sabbath day. He rebuked the Pharisees for their excessive scrupulousness, for their over-righteous exactions; but never intimated that the Sabbath law was abolished. The specification of an act such as the healing of a man who had a withered hand as no desecration of the Sabbath implies that the day itself is sacred; but for the implied sacredness of the day there is no significance in any of Christ's teachings on the subject.

Seventhly, the practice of the apostolic Church teaches that on and after the resurrection of Christ from the dead the day was changed from the seventh to the first, and that the Sabbath became a monument to perpetuate the memory not only of the work of creation, but also specially of the resurrection of Christ and the pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit, and through these of the whole work of redemption and salvation.

Many of the Jews who believed in Christ—that is, accepted him as their promised Messiah—retained their attachment to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law. Some of them even contended that it was necessary to be circumcised, and to keep the whole law of Moses. And they made the Church not a little trouble on this account. The Ebionites were especially zealous in these matters. Of course, such professed Christians would naturally consider the seventh as a holy day, and probably many others not so zealous as they would join them in the temple or synagogue service

on Saturday, and also attend the assembly of Christians on the first day of the week. The history of the times plainly indicates that this was the fact. But from the first it is patent that the Christian Church met on the first day of the week in commemoration of Christ's resurrection and, after Pentecost, of the outpouring of the Spirit. Their services consisted of "prayer to Christ as to God," of hymns of praise and thanksgiving, of preaching the Gospel, and of breaking of bread; in a word, of religious devotions. The first day of the week was called the Sabbath, but more frequently it was called the Lord's day, meaning Christ's day. It is recorded in profane history that when Christians were arraigned before civil tribunals under accusations of disturbing the public peace it was common to ask them if they kept the Lord's day, and that their uniform answer was, "I am a Christian; I cannot omit it." The observance of the first day of the week as the Sabbath passed so speedily and so universally into the custom of the Christian Church, and has continued to the present time so generally throughout Christendom, that the practice is itself adequate justification, and a sufficient answer to all seventh-day argumentation. The idea that any definite hours of time are in themselves holy, and are to be observed because of their inherent sacredness, is manifest folly; for the observance of any such definite set of hours is wholly impracticable. Hours of the day are every-where changing with the rapidity of the earth's revolution; and absolute time, if such an expression is admissible, cannot be every-where observed. The only thing essential is that one-seventh of time be religiously observed. The purpose of the Sabbath requires that persons living in the same and nearly the same longitude observe the same time. If, therefore, a Christian man live in a community where the seventh day is observed, he will better accomplish the purpose for which he keeps holy day by making the seventh day his Sabbath; and he may do so unless his conscience require him to rebuke the superstition which makes the seventh day sacred and the first secular.

What obligation does the Sabbath law impose upon civil authorities?

Before answering this question directly let us state the case. It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that man and beast will be physically the better for resting one day in seven. Business activities develop intellectual power in those who engage in them; but in life, as it is, only a few are so engaged as to attain unto a very appreciable development. And this would

be very greatly improved by an occasional cessation of business, and attention to moral and religious subjects. The mass of mankind are employed in a plodding routine of the same duties, repeated over and over, requiring but little thought, and furnishing a very stinted and limited intellectual development.

The most efficient educational advantage available for the masses is found where one day in seven they assemble themselves together to hear the Word of God read and expounded; and if they have the same Word in their houses, and are stimulated to read, to study, to inwardly digest and judge for themselves, they are found to be more intelligent than the same class of people in any community under the sun. Compare the Scotch with the Irish peasantry. What we here say of intellectual improvement may also be said of aesthetic culture.

The purpose and intent of the Sabbath is specially moral and religious culture; and results, as shown by the history of mankind, fully demonstrate that the Sabbath is a divinely appointed and divinely employed instrumentality for the purpose of moral and religious education.

These affirmations are so obviously true that further remark is superfluous. The Sabbath is promotive of man's physical, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, and religious well-being; it is therefore essential to the highest good of the individual and of society. To secure its object it must be protected and defended. Business and amusements, and any avocation or employment which would prevent or disturb its proper observance, must be prohibited. An individual, and any number of individuals voluntarily associated, are incompetent, have not the power to enforce the necessary prohibition the whole society, represented in its civil authorities, is alone adequate for this protection and defense. The civil authorities, then, have the power to aid society and the individuals of which society is composed in securing their end, their highest good, in a matter wherein neither the society nor the individuals can secure that end for themselves. Therefore we affirm that governments have a right to exercise that power, and, having the right, are under obligations so to do.

But it is objected that governments, especially those under which Church

and state have no legal connection, have not a right to restrain Atheists, Jews, and Mohammedans for the benefit of Christians. The objection may be answered by a retort. Governments have not a right to restrain Christians—or, which is the same thing, deprive them of their religious privileges—at the dictate of atheists and infidels. The answer is as good as the objection: neither meets the case. The fact is, government cannot ignore the religious character of its subjects. All men have some religious opinions; they affirm or deny. Infidelity is an affirmation of unbelief. And it is as impossible to maintain a government on the supposition that man has not a religious nature as it is to maintain a government on the supposition that man has not a rational nature. The idea of government is as incongruous with the idea that its subjects are absolutely irreligious as it is incongruous with the idea that its subjects are brutes or idiots.

But it is. asked, What religion shall the government recognize in a heterogeneous population? The answer is obvious. Republics are governed by majorities. The government of these United States was organized when almost the entire population were Protestant Christians. The great majority has been, through the whole history of the country, and it now is, both Christian and Protestant. The government always did, and now does, recognize Protestant Christianity as the religion of the country. For Irish Catholics to come hither and demand that the Bible shall be excluded from the public schools, and for German rationalists to come hither and demand that all Sabbath laws shall be abrogated—on the ground in the one case that the Bible is a Protestant version, and in the other that the Sabbath is a Christian institution, and in both cases under the further pretense that a republican government should recognize no religion, is simply preposterous. As well, since monogamy is a Christian institution, might polygamists and free-lovers require that the marriage laws be unconditionally repealed. Yea, in a word, as well might disorganizing atheists demand that the government become at once positively and actively atheistic.

# **BOOK SEVEN: ECCLESIOLOGY**

# CHAPTER 11: THE CHURCH.

DEFINITION OF TERM.—I. What it expresses. 2. What it implies. The term *ecclesia*, usually, in the New Testament translated by the term Church, in its generic sense signifies an assembly. The promiscuous gathering of the people at Ephesus, called together by the complaints of Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, is in the original called an *ecclesia*, and the term is, in our English version, properly translated by the term assembly.

To this generic idea we must add the idea of a religious purpose; and yet this does not make the definition complete, for the assembly on Mars Hill was a gathering for a religious purpose, but was not a Church. We must add the idea of organization. We have, then, an assembly organized for a religious purpose; which implies a government with officers for its administration, and the actual performance of the acts for which the government was organized. "The visible Church of Christ," says the thirteenth of our Articles of Religion, "is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." A Christian Church is an assembly of Christian believers, of persons who believe in Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of men. The number is not essential, agreement and association are all that is requisite; where two or three are gathered in Christ's name, there his presence is manifested and his promised blessing bestowed. A single assembly of Christian believers, properly organized, with officers sufficient in number to discharge the functions contemplated in the organization, is a Church, and is called the Church of the locality in which it is situated; such as the Church at Jerusalem, at Antioch, in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, *et cetera*.

The entire body of Christian believers on earth is called the Church.

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This may include all those who have been baptized in the name of Christ throughout the whole world, and who

believe in the doctrines of Christianity: this is usually called the visible Church; or it may be restricted to those who are real believers; are united to Christ by true and saving faith; are, through faith in Christ, adopted as the children of God, and heirs of eternal life: this is called the invisible Church. In modern parlance, we speak of the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant Church, the Greek Church; and again, of the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, the Congregational, the Baptist, the Methodist, and other Churches; and by these terms we designate the aggregate of all those Christian believers who agree with each other in special points of doctrine or discipline, and in which they differ from others—these are called denominational Churches.

The aggregate of the local and denominational Churches of any country is sometimes distinguished by the national name of the country in which those Churches are located—as the Church of America; but more commonly the plural form is used, the nationality being distinguished by an adjective—as the American Churches. The term English Church is more denominational than national.

When we speak of the Church as we do of the family or the State, we have an abstract idea of what is essential, omitting what is local and what is denominational. This differs not essentially from the visible Church, and may be defined as above, "a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular; and God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers; after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Christ is head of the Church. Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it and present it to himself a glorious Church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his

bones. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and his Church. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. Ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

The Christian Church is a divine institution; in other words, it is the will of God that such an organization should exist among men. The above passages make this evident beyond controversy; and it is also evident from the terms employed to characterize the Church, and from the affirmations made concerning it, that it is an institution peculiarly dear to God—eminently sacred—and more emphatically divine than any other institution existing among men. The will of God concerning the existence of a visible Church refers not merely to the Christian dispensation; the Church is common to all times; has existed in all the ages of human history, and will exist to the end of time.

The record concerning the offerings brought unto the Lord by Cain and Abel implies an appointed time for a solemn assembly and for religious services.

The offering of sacrifices, which was common to all patriarchal times, evinces the same thing. There was a revival of religion in the time of Seth, and its description is that "then began men to call on the name of the Lord." Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations; he walked with God, and built an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. Melchisedec was a priest of the most high God. From the time of Abraham to the destruction of Jerusalem, and, in some sense, even until now, the descendants of Abraham have been a people chosen of the Lord; separate from the other peoples of the earth, and that for a religious purpose. No man having any respect for the Word of God, having faith in anything

earthly as of divine appointment, will, for a moment, question whether the, Jewish Church under the Mosaic dispensation was an organization of divine appointment. The Church in the wilderness, with its services in the tent of the tabernacle, and the Church at Jerusalem, with its solemnities in the temple built by Solomon, were divinely ordered. Its high priest, its urim and thummim, its ark of the covenant beneath the wings of cherubim, its manifestation of divine glory in the shekinah, all its sacrifices, both ceremonial and propitiatory, its solemn forms of prayer, its psalms of praise, its supplications and benedictions, all evincing that out of Zion the perfection of beauty God had shined, all were according to the fashion which God showed unto Moses in the mount.

That the Christian Church is a divine institution may be argued from the nature and necessities of the case. All divine ends, so far as is known to man, are secured by instrumentalities. Any way, we do not know of any moral and religious ends that are secured without the employment of what may be called second causes; or if the terms be preferred, we may say without agents and instruments. The end to be secured in the employment of moral and religious forces is the salvation of men from the evils and perils of sin. We have no record of any instance of conscious salvation that was secured by a purely divine efficiency. Cornelius was visited by an angel, and by him assured that his prayers and alms had come up as a memorial before the Lord; but for the completed salvation proffered by the Gospel of Christ it was needful that Cornelius send for Peter. When Peter came and preached salvation through Christ, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word. Saul of Tarsus was met on his way to Damascus by Christ himself, he saw a light above the brightness of the sun, and heard the voice of Jesus, saying, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest;" this divine manifestation was a call to and a qualification for the apostleship and ministry; but for his own personal salvation he was instructed to inquire for Ananias. Under the ministry of this holy man the scales at once fell from his eyes, and being justified by faith he found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is not pertinent to burden this discussion with an inquiry into the methods by which pagans may attain unto eternal life; it is sufficient to speak of Gospel salvation. This is conditioned upon faith; but faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God; how then can they

hear without a preacher, and how can he preach except he be sent? An organized Church, then, is a prerequisite to the accomplishment of Gospel purposes; a Church to authorize and sustain a ministry by whom the Word may be preached; that Word which is essential to the hearing, by which faith and its conditioned salvation are made possible.

From the doctrine that the Church is a divine institution, it is necessarily to be inferred that the Church *must* be organized and conducted in accordance with the divine will. As says our ritual respecting matrimony, "So many as are coupled together otherwise than God's Word doth allow are not joined together by God, neither is their matrimony lawful," so we may say of any institution, that to be divine it must be according to God's will, as declared in his Word. As the Church is, in some respects, a voluntary association, some have inferred therefrom that its character and modes of operation may be wholly determined by the consent of its members; but it is not so, for though a voluntary association in the sense that its members are not constrained to enter into it, but do so or not at their own option, it is also a divine association, because, among other reasons, it is God's will that men do thus associate themselves together. Our Puritan forefathers, when they came to these shores, to secure for themselves and their children civil and religious liberty, judged that it was their right to organize and administer both State and Church in all respects according to their own will; and hence they established laws and executed them, by which they became tyrants and persecutors of God's people. It is obvious that both in State and Church much is left to be determined by the consent of the governed. No specific and definite form of either civil or ecclesiastical government is prescribed in the sacred Scriptures. But it is equally obvious that principles governing these organizations are specified, and that it is required that these principles be observed. An association of individual persons that ignores or contravenes the requirements of God's Word, no matter by what name it may be called, is not a Church of God, cannot claim his sanction, nor expect his promised blessing. It is essential to a divine institution that it be fashioned after the divine pattern in all respects wherein the divine will is revealed; in matters concerning which there is no revelation, the discretion of the Church in determining what the exigencies of the case require, is the authorized tribunal; and to its authority the individual

member is bound to submit.

An organization implies a purpose, a something to be done, an act or acts to be performed, persons appointed to do the thing or things proposed, and a prescribed method by which the purpose or end may be accomplished. The Christian Church is an organization whose end or purpose is the establishment and continuance of the means of grace. The means of grace are chiefly the preaching of the Gospel and the sacraments. The preaching of the Gospel, with its accompaniments, we call the ordinary means of grace, and shall devote a chapter to their discussion. The sacraments are means of grace, but because of their special character, we shall speak of them distinctly in a separate chapter. The discussion of the ministry as to the methods of appointment, as to the nature and functions of the office, involves the discussion of the general subject of Church Polity. This will constitute the concluding chapter of the present work on Systematic Theology.

# CHAPTER 12: THE ORDINARY MEANS OF GRACE.

IN apostolic times the preaching of the Gospel consisted of a rehearsal of the narrative of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. During the lives of the apostles many took it in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which were most surely believed among them; and from the many gospels thus written the Church, by common consent, adopted the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John as canonical. Early in the days of the fathers the Acts and Epistles were added to the Gospels, and the whole was received as the recognized standard of Christian faith and practice. Thence, until now the public service of the Church has consisted very largely of the reading and expounding of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.

The preaching of the Gospel, or, more comprehensively, the preaching of the Word of God, is by divine appointment a prominent means of grace, a divinely appointed and divinely employed instrumentality for the enlightenment and salvation of men. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Our Gospel came not unto you in word only but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. When ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

A divine power which is unto salvation in some way attends the preaching of the Word. We speak here, of course, of Gospel salvation. By what means pagans are brought to fear God and work righteousness, what

degrees of moral and religious culture may have been attained in this life by those who in the final issue shall come from north, south, east, and west, and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we do not here attempt to describe or define. The unequal distribution of religious privileges among men, as well as the unequal distribution of natural talent, means of intellectual culture, wealth, social advantages, civil liberty, and, in a word, all earthly good, is a mystery of divine providence we shall not attempt to explain. We know that the scales of justice are evenly balanced; ability equals obligation; man is responsible only for what he has, and not at all for what he has not. We know that the Lord reigneth; and, though clouds and darkness are round about him, we know that righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

Though, the explanation be not obvious to the human intellect, the fact is patent that where the Gospel of the grace of God has free course it is glorified in the regeneration and sanctification of men. Christian nations attain to a higher degree of moral and religious culture than other nations; and among Christian nations believers are better men than unbelievers—they live better lives, enjoy more of real good, and die with better hopes. This regenerating force is manifested more through the preaching of the Word than through any other or all other means. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation; it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The preaching of Christ crucified is to them that are called, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

In what does the power of the Word consist? On this question there are three theories deserving attention: first, the rationalistic; second, the Augustinian; and, third, the Arminian.

The rationalistic theory affirms that the power of the Word read and expounded to convert men, to change their character, opinions, sympathies, experiences, and hopes, consists in the natural power of the truth itself. The theory denies that in the conversion of men, in their moral and religious culture, there is anything supernatural. Religious experience is wholly a matter of education. The Gospel is a powerful educational force; its sublime, soul-stirring truths have power to awaken thought, to excite desire, to modify and change opinion, to transform

intellections and sensibilities, and to control volitions.

This theory is partly true in what it affirms, wholly false in what it denies. The truth it affirms may be emphasized, and the emphasis cannot well be too strong. The Gospel is itself a power. If the preaching of the Word had in itself no better adaptation to improve the moral and religious character of the hearer than an ointment of clay has to the bestowment of sight upon one born blind, yet if it pleased the Omnipotent One to employ it for that purpose it would be made effectual, it would accomplish that whereunto it was sent. In no case can God's Word return unto him void. But it is reasonable to, expect in advance that the instruments which infinite wisdom adopts, and infinite power employs, for the accomplishment of any purpose are wisely chosen, and well adapted to their proposed end. The Gospel is itself a powerful agency for the moral renovation of sinful men. Let this be illustrated. The Gospel is a declaration that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Now, let this thought, in its Gospel breadth and depth and height, so far as man's feeble intellect is competent to apprehend it, become a theme of earnest thought and intense interest; let faith become the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; let the hearer come to feel in the depths of his consciousness that he who was in the beginning, who was with God, and was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that was made—the divine logos, became flesh; that in the person of Jesus Christ God was manifest in the flesh; that this incarnation, with the life Jesus lived and the death he died, was solely for the purpose and intent that through his incarnation, life, and death it might become possible for God to be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; or briefly, as above, let him believe that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; and it is manifest that to such a hearer, thus taught and thus impressed, the exceeding sinfulness and infinite peril of sin becomes a most profound and all-absorbing conviction. The Gospel naturally convinces men of sin; and this is the first step in the progress of a sinner's salvation. For, as a man would not employ a physician at great expense, and take nauseating medicines, unless he thought himself sick; so no man will deny himself, take up his cross, or follow Christ in obedience to his commandments, as a means of salvation from sin, until he is first convicted of sin; until he think himself

a sinner, and helplessly exposed by his sins to their fearful consequences.

Again: suppose a man profoundly convicted of the exceeding sinfulness and fearful peril of sin, so that from the depths of his nature he cries, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" Suppose the Gospel be preached to him, and in trustful obedience he looks to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. If through the Word he come to see this hope set before him in the Gospel, it is manifest that the Gospel will be to him good news, glad tidings of great joy. The Gospel presents him such a savior as in his deepest consciousness he feels he needs—a God—man, who can put his hand upon both and be a daysman between him and the just one whom he has offended. God manifest in the flesh is evidently an all-sufficient Savior.

These illustrations may be continued through all the wants and woes to which man is heir. The Gospel is wondrously adapted to all the experiences of human life. There is here a balm for every wound, a cordial for every fear; and the rationalist is right in saying there is power in the truths themselves adapted to enlightenment, conviction, faith, trust, hope, and to all that man needs for godliness here and eternal life hereafter. And yet he is fatally in error when he affirms that the Word alone is itself adequate to even the beginnings of salvation; the Word is adapted as an instrument, but is not efficient as an agent. "Go ye into all the world, and teach all nations; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. I have planted and Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God, that giveth the increase. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified, through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

If the question be asked, Why is it that in the same community, in the same congregation of persons who hear the same Gospel, some are saved

and some are not? the rationalistic answer is that it is wholly of the will of the hearer. Those who are benefited by the preached Word are those who give attention thereto, meditate upon it, inwardly digest its import, become cognizant of its nature and design, of their relations to it and interest in it, and yield a voluntary obedience to its dictates. Those who hear, but are not saved, either refuse to give attention to what they hear, give no voluntary thoughtfulness to the subject, and remain well-nigh as ignorant of what the Gospel is as though they had never heard it; or, giving some attention, and knowing somewhat of its claims, they voluntarily refuse to yield obedience thereto. In both cases, and in every case, the difference in results is wholly referable to the voluntary action of the hearers themselves.

The Augustinian theory does not necessarily ignore the adaptation of the Gospel as a system of truths to the work of human reformation, nor the agency of the human will in giving attention to truth declared, and in yielding obedience to its dictates; nay, more, it affirms that these things are ordained to be in all cases where Gospel salvation occurs, but it denies that there is any efficiency in either. The Word, read or expounded is a flow of sound, and the ideas words are employed to convey are dead things, considered with reference to spiritual life. And even the human will itself is as impotent for any working towards salvation as is the Word or the truth. The whole and sole efficiency is in the agency of the Divine Spirit. The reason why one is saved and another is not is wholly and solely because God designs that so it shall be; and in carrying out his own purpose of election he gives to the elect an efficient influence of the Spirit, by which the man gives saving attention to the Word and yields himself in submissive obedience to the Spirit's effectual working. To the man not saved God does not give this office of the Spirit; and because he has it not he does not, yea, he cannot, hear, believe, and be saved.

It may, it does, seem strange that thinkers who center everything in the sovereignty of grace should attach any importance whatever to means; but a stranger thing than this actually exists. Some Augustinians have, and perhaps some now do hold so firmly to the doctrine that the divine decree of election includes not only the persons elected, but also the time, means, and circumstances of their salvation, and the fact that the saved are to be saved through faith in a preached Gospel that they have

catalogued the whole pagan world among the non-elect. God has decreed the salvation of the elect as an end, and the preaching of the Gospel as a means to that end; therefore, where the means do not exist the end cannot ensue. The whole doctrine of Augustinian election has been sufficiently discussed in previous pages of this work; the particular phase of it now under consideration need not therefore be specially examined. The truth in the theory is that without Christ man can do nothing effectually towards his salvation. Its antagonism to the Pelagian idea that man's unaided will is competent to make such use of Gospel truth as will issue in his salvation from sin and the attainment of eternal life is well put; its arguments adduced to prove that the will of man unaided by grace is entirely impotent for any work of salvation are unanswerable; the doctrine itself is a Bible doctrine. If, therefore, man so hear the Word of life and salvation as to profit thereby it is because the Spirit of God helps his infirmities. But the Augustinian affirmation that the human will is wholly antagonistic or inactive in the work of salvation, so that the issue is wholly of the Spirit and not at all of the man, is an unwarranted and erroneous affirmation.

The Arminian answer to the question, In what does the power of the preached Gospel consist? is that it consists, primarily, chiefly, and efficiently, in the agency and power of the Holy Spirit, conjoined with the consenting and co-operating agency of man's free will. Whenever the Gospel is faithfully preached the omnipresent Spirit gives to the natural force of the truth uttered a supernaturally enlightening power. The hearer is convinced, convicted. If he yield himself subject to the force of truth the Spirit through the Word shows him Christ and invites him to come; if he come the Spirit gives him power to trust, to believe; if he believe he is saved. The Spirit regenerates, comforts, bears witness of adoption and heirship, fills him with the love of God shed abroad in his heart, and inspires good hope of eternal life.

The Calvinian objection to this theory, as stated by Dr. Hodge, is that according to it "man, and not God, determines who shall be saved." We reply, A fairer statement of the theory would be that each individual man determines for himself whether he will permit God to save him; and in this form we accept the objection, and are willing to abide by it. But again, it is said salvation, according to the theory, depends upon what

man does, and this is salvation by works, and not by grace. We reply, Salvation is conditioned upon faith, an act of voluntary choice in man; and if this be called salvation by works we shall not contend about the terms, but reply further that it is by grace that man has the power to choose, so that we are saved by grace, though it be through faith, since faith, or the power to believe, is the gift of God.

But again, says Professor H. B. Smith, "Calvinism may be a sharp and hard system; but it takes no position from which it can fairly be inferred that we are damned by grace." This is saying that according to Arminianism, since it teaches that it is by grace that man has power to choose or refuse life, if he refuse, and by his refusal bring damnation upon himself, then he is damned by grace. We reply, As well might it be said that the lost are damned by creation; for without creation there would be no power to sin, and of course no sinning, and no damnation.

We have written of the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures under the head of Apologetics; of the Bible as a means of grace, to be read, diligently studied, taught unto the children, for the cultivation of a devotional spirit, under the head of Ethics; in this chapter we have spoken of the Word as read and expounded in the congregation of the people, and of the supernatural power by the Spirit which accompanies its faithful exposition,—from all of which it is manifest that the Bible in the hands of all the people, faithfully taught unto the children and expounded in the congregation, is, *par eminence*, the instrumentality of the Church for the religious well-being of mankind. A competent knowledge of its sacred contents is so essentially a means of grace, so indispensable to the attainment of Gospel salvation by any appreciable portion of the community, that its wide diffusion, and a diligent industry in giving to the public generally suitable instruction therein, becomes one of the most responsible and solemn obligations of the Church.

Of prayer, another of the ordinary means of grace, we have also made mention elsewhere, and need not advert to it further in this connection. The other accompaniments of public worship, such as the hymns of praise, adoration, and thanksgiving, the mutual exhortations of the people one to another, and the testimony for Christ, since they are of their nature incidental and subsidiary, and are variable, as circumstances

require, though vastly influential for good, do not furnish topics requiring discussion in works like the present.

# CHAPTER 13: THE SACRAMENTS.

RITUALISTIC observances are essential to a visible Church—it is by them, to a great extent, that the Church becomes visible. Godliness has an external form as well as an internal power—an outward manifestation as well as an inner life. Prayer is paramount desire, but he who never forms his thoughts in forms of prayer never prays. Love is the fulfilling of the law; but if a man never manifest love by outward acts, it may be fairly inferred that he is a stranger to benevolent affections. They, therefore, err greatly who regard rites and ceremonies as non-essential, in the sense that it is a matter of indifference whether they be observed or neglected. If God say, *do this*, though the thing to be done be such, in itself, that it is a matter of perfect indifference whether it be done or not, yet, by the commandment it has become a matter of as much importance as is obedience to righteous authority.

A divine command must be obeyed, though there be no reason for obedience except that it is commanded. But divine requirements are always founded in good reasons, and thoughtful piety will very generally, if not universally, be able to discover what those reasons are. It is, therefore, a reasonable anticipation that all divinely required observances have a significance; that they are exponential of opinions and sentiments which are of real value in religion; that they are grounded in rational considerations; and that their validity consists chiefly, if not entirely, in an intelligent apprehension, on the part of those participating in them, of their purpose and intent. But as, on the one hand, some err greatly in attaching too little or no importance to ritualistic observances, so, on the other hand, many err vastly more, in ascribing to them an importance that does not belong to them. When observances are foisted into the services of the Church, which have no Scripture warrant either expressed or implied, or when a form or manner of discharging a real Christian duty is insisted upon, which form is not prescribed in the Word of God, those who insist upon such observances or such modes are guilty of teaching

for doctrine the commandments of men; and not unfrequently such transgress the commandment of God by their own traditions; they pharisaically tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and omit the weightier matters of the law.

The sixteenth of our Articles of Religion is as follows: "Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him. There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. Those five commonly called sacraments—that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction—are not to be accounted for sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's-supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God. The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith:—"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

No valuable information as to the nature of the ordinances can be derived from the meaning of the term sacrament; for in both classical and ecclesiastical use it is ambiguous. It signifies, in classical use, something sacred; sometimes the money deposited by parties contending at court; sometimes the judicial process itself. Again, the obligation of a soldier, and then the oath he takes, and again any oath. In ecclesiastical use, besides anything sacred, it signifies whatever has a hidden meaning, any rite, ceremony, or sign which has a secret import; a sacrament is :a mystery.

In modern Protestant use a sacrament is an ordinance instituted by Christ; has a religious significance; its observance is to be perpetuated; and, properly observed, is a means of grace, a channel of spiritual

blessings.

In theological language, a sacrament is a sign and a seal. As a sign, the scholarly technical definition is "*signum significans*." This means, in plain terms, that the service has a significance—it signifies something. Not to say this would be to say that it is a senseless ceremony, or, at most, it is a mere badge of a Christian's profession. Of what Baptism and the Lord's-supper are significant, of what they declare, show forth, or represent, we shall speak further on when we come to treat of them specifically.

As a seal, the technical term is "*signum confirmans*." This implies the existence of a covenant or contract between parties, in which it is stipulated that, on conditions to be performed by one of the parties, the other promises to confer certain specified benefits. The covenant here is the covenant of grace, in which, on condition of repentance toward god and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, God promises pardon, regeneration, and adoption. As men are accustomed to set their seal to legal documents, thereby confirming the conditions and promises of the contract, so, in this case, God has ordained Baptism and the Lord's-supper as seals of his covenant with men. Again, slightly different from this view, though involved in it, the covenant is considered as relating to the visible Church, to membership in it, and the privileges pertaining to it; and, in this view, circumcision is regarded as the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, in which membership in the Church and the privileges pertaining thereto were conditioned upon lineal descent; and baptism is the seal of the Christian covenant under which a profession of faith in Christ is the condition upon which admission to Church fellowship is promised.

In respect to all this we have to say the sacraments are signs, or they are nothing; perhaps they are appropriately illustrated by the figure of a seal —there seems to be some rhetorical advantage gained by the use of the figure. And more, perhaps, in the divine mind, these ordinances *were* ordained to be perpetually a visible reminder of God's good will and gracious promises, and thus be a perpetual confirmation of his covenant, and an assurance of fidelity in the fulfillment of his promises. The present writer, however, fears he does not fully appreciate this idea of a seal; he is

sure he does not see as much importance in the thought itself as he finds in the common theological treatises on the subject.

The Roman Catholic Church adds to Baptism and the Lord's-supper, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction. Confirmation is a service by which those baptized in infancy ostensibly take upon themselves the obligations of the baptismal covenant, and by which the candidate is recognized as a member of the visible Church. The essential of the service is the imposition of hands by those having episcopal authority.

The thing done is a Christian service, and the doing it by the imposition of hands contravenes no Christian practice, and does not desecrate any sacred rite. Something which is the equivalent must be practiced wherever there is a Christian Church; and certainly the recognition of membership in the body of Christ is an interest of sufficient value to justify imposing ceremonials.

But though high consideration of the service of confirmation is not only allowable, but also eminently appropriate, there is nothing in the thing itself, and there is no warrant in the Word of God that justifies or allows that confirmation be placed in the same category with baptism and the eucharist. Calling it a sacrament may be merely a matter of lexicography; but if by so naming it, it is intended to affirm that imposition of hands is a divinely appointed method of introduction into the visible Church, we deny, and wait the proof. The same thing may be said of orders and of matrimony.

Some solemn, impressive ceremony on the occasion of the induction of candidates into the Christian ministry, and on the occasion of the joining together of persons in holy matrimony, is not only a demand of good taste, but also has the sanction of Christ's example and the practice of the wise and good in all the ages. But this does not invest any service that may be adopted for these occasions with the same or similar sanctions and importance that attach to the divinely constituted ordinances of the Christian Church.

Penance, according to the Roman Church, is a service by which on condition, on the part of the penitent, of sorrow for sin, a purpose of

amendment, of satisfaction to God, and auricular confession, the priest grants pardon for sins committed after baptism. This is based upon what is wholly an assumption of the Church of Rome; namely, that in the Power of the keys committed to Peter and his successors, and through them to the priesthood generally, is the power to forgive sins, and that for sins committed after baptism there is no remission except on condition of confession to a priest. That these are most unwarranted assumptions and gross corruptions of the Gospel of God, we assume without discussion. Extreme unction is anointing with oil those dangerously ill (they having been baptized), accompanied with prayer, by which sins are forgiven and grace, strengthening the soul, is imparted. It is very proper that prayer should be offered at the bedside of the dying, and anointing with oil has the sanction of apostolic practice. The chief trouble here, and in penance as well, is found in the preposterous claim of the priesthood that these services, of themselves, confer grace.

Why under the Gospel dispensation are there two sacraments, and only two? Bishop Merrill, in his work on "Christian Baptism," in illustration of another topic, gives us an answer which, in substance with additions, is as follows: The work of salvation may be regarded in two aspects, justification and sanctification—the former God accomplishes in the person of his Son, the latter in the person of his Spirit. Under the Jewish dispensation the former was represented by bloody sacrifices, and the latter by circumcision and watery ablutions. Under the Gospel dispensation the work of Christ in providing by his death for the justification of believers is symbolized by the sacrament of the Lord's-supper; and the work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating the souls of believers is symbolized by water baptism.

The symbols under the old covenant, having become obsolete by the introduction of the new, might have been all laid aside, and others entirely new substituted in their place. Sacrifices and circumcisions were laid aside; but the Savior seized upon and consecrated two existing ceremonies—the supper of the Passover and baptism; the former to show forth his death till his coming again, and the latter to symbolize the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Under the dispensation of types and shadows many sacrifices and divers washings were of service; for they not only represented the two leading aspects of the work of salvation, but

were also a shadow of better ceremonies, of good things to come. The antitypes of those types and shadows having come, there was no longer any need for their continuance. Henceforth ceremonies were requisite only for the prominent leading purposes of salvation, and the two adopted are in this respect exhaustive. They represent justification and regeneration. These, with what is inseparable from them, with what are their invariable accompaniments, include the whole work of God in the salvation of the human soul. Two sacraments are needful—one to show forth the work of Christ, the other to represent the work of the Spirit. The nature of the case shows that these have a natural significance. For more than these no good reason is apparent, and the folly of the Church of Rome in inventing five others is obvious.

## **THE EFFICACY OF THE SACRAMENTS.**

The Roman doctrine of transubstantiation forms a not very unnatural ground for the inference that the sacraments, especially the Supper of the Lord, are in themselves efficacious for the purposes for which they are administered. If the bread and wine in the act of consecration become, or partake of the substance of, the body and blood of Christ, and if in the incarnation the body and blood of Christ became a divine-human body, so that the blood of Christ is the blood of God, then he that eats the flesh of Christ and drinks his blood eats and drinks divinity, and the sacrament becomes itself an impartation of the divine nature. This seems to me to be a fair representation of the Romish doctrine of the presence of Christ in the communion. By transubstantiation the bread and wine become a divine substance and have saving power, just as fire has the power to burn, poison to kill, and medicine to cure. The efficacy of the sacraments, then, consists in a power inhering in the elements themselves, and is dependent upon nothing else.

Consistently, however, an exception is made in the case where the communicant is guilty of mortal sin. By mortal sin is meant a sin unto death, a sin for which there is no redemption, an incurable sin. To say

that an incurable sin can be cured is of course a contradiction; even the blood of Christ cannot wash away such a sin. Inconsistently another exception is made. It is said to be essential to the efficacy of the sacraments that the administrator intend to communicate to the recipient the blessings the Church designs to be communicated. And again, equally inconsistent with the doctrine of a saving power inhering in the elements themselves, is an alleged prerequisite that the recipient do not oppose an obstacle. With these exceptions, it is alleged that the sacraments, duly administered by the priesthood having authority by divine appointment, do of the efficiency inhering in themselves confer grace and salvation. The technicality by which this doctrine of efficacy is commonly expressed in the theological treatises is, "ex opere operato"—an efficacy from a force operating.

Luther was a man of strong impulses. His educational prejudices were intense, and he was emancipated from the Roman yoke by a slow and gradual process. He had heard from his childhood, doubtless with a thrilling interest in his fervent spirit, the unquestioned announcement "Hoc est meum corpus,"

and his faith, without a wavering of doubt, had accepted the Roman doctrine of the "real presence." Such an association could not be easily broken, nor could such a faith be readily eradicated. Therefore, when Zwingle announced that the sacraments were not "means of grace," that they were merely significant emblems of great Gospel truths, Luther strenuously opposed him.

He wrote with chalk upon the platform floor of the convention, "This is my body;" and placing his feet upon what he had written he literally stood upon the words of the Master, and announced that his opinions would abide by the affirmation of a "real presence." He, however, renounced the doctrine of a *tran*-substantiation, and affirmed a *con*-substantiation that is, the bread and wine were not changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, but the body and blood of Christ as to substance was with, accompanied, the elements of the communion. The bread and wine remained bread and wine, not only as to their qualities, but also as to their essence or substance, but the body of Christ was substantially there. It is evident from this history that Luther himself and, as we understand

it, the Lutherans generally after him, to this day, by their doctrine of the real presence, mean more than that all-pervading presence which orthodox Christianity ascribes to Christ as a divine person, and more than that manifested presence of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, which is promised to the Church in all her assemblies, and specially in the solemn services of the sacraments. Lutheranism teaches a real presence akin to the real presence of the Roman Church. It avoids some of the monstrously preposterous inconsistencies which attach to the Roman doctrine.

As for example, transubstantiation is contradicted by the testimony of the senses. The bread and wine after consecration, as before, are to sight, taste, smell, and touch bread and wine; hence the necessity of affirming that a given thing may have the qualities of one kind of matter and the substance of another. This silly assertion is avoided by consubstantiation. But in the light of common sense both the *trans* and the *con* are alike contrary to truth and sober reason.

The Lutheran doctrine of the efficacy of the sacraments is an improvement upon the Roman, at least in one respect very valuable and important. It rejects the "ex opere operato," and affirms an "ex opere operantis;" that is, the sacrament is efficacious from the work of the recipient, of him operating or receiving it. The benefits of the service accrue to the communicant on condition of his penitence, faith, and good intent; and yet, though rejecting the idea of an inhering efficacy in the sense of the Roman Church, the Lutherans still adhere to it in some sense, as their doctrine of a real presence would seem to require. The old writers were wont to say, "Fire will not cause the wood to burn unless the wood be dry; but its dryness does not give fire its power." So the elements in the sacraments will not purify and save an unbelieving soul; but if purification and salvation ensue the power to save issues from an efficacy inhering in the sacrament itself.

The antipodes of the Romanists on this subject are the rationalists.

They deny in effect that the sacraments have any efficacy whatever. Baptism is a ceremony appropriate to the initiation of members into the visible Church, and the Lord's-supper is a memorial service, and nothing

more. Both are appropriate and expressive exponents of the opinions and sentiments of those participating in them, and not at all channels by which anything is communicated to them. Whatever good may be derived from them is the same as the good anyone receives when he does a good thing. Right and proper conduct of all kinds and at all times has a beneficial reflex influence. As in almsgiving and in prayer, so in the sacraments, the communicant is naturally made better by what he does; but the service itself has no power in itself or in its accompaniments to confer a benefit—it is not a means of grace in any such sense as is affirmed by orthodox Christians.

As most Protestant Christians regard the sacraments, the truth lies somewhere between the extremes of ritualism and rationalism. On the one hand, Baptism and the Lord's-supper are services which, when properly observed, are attended with a very valuable and important religious benefit; on the other, the external services, considered in themselves, have no natural adaptation to any spiritual purposes.

In what, then, does the efficacy of the sacraments consist? Plainly in the agency of the Holy Spirit. When the Gospel is preached there is some obvious adaptation in the truth declared to produce the state of mind desired, but that is wholly inadequate for purposes of salvation. To be effectual, the Word must be preached with an unction from the Holy One—in the power and demonstration of the Spirit. Much more is this requisite in the sacraments, for here, if there be any special adaptation, it is not obvious. In baptism, the thing signified is the cleansing of the inner spirit from the pollutions of sin. Water has a cleansing power, but so has fire; and if, beyond the mere idea of purifying, there be any resemblance between the cleansing of the outward man from material pollution and the purification of the inner spirit from the impurities of sin, that resemblance is wholly concealed from human apprehension. In the Supper, regarded as a badge of a Christian profession, we have what is appropriate, but any thing else would be equally so. So, also, considered as a memorial service, the act done is suitable for the purpose, but any other act would serve this same purpose quite as well.

Therefore, we affirm that if, in the sacraments, there be any power or efficacy to effect a spiritual result, to save or be promotive of salvation, to

communicate or confer grace—if, in a word, the sacraments be means of grace, it is because they are not only divinely appointed for this purpose, but are also divinely employed. Their whole efficacy is supernatural, it is external to themselves. It is the accompanying presence and power of the Holy Spirit of God.

## THE NECESSITY OF THE SACRAMENTS.

For what purpose or purposes are the sacraments necessary? They are not essential to a state of grace on earth, or to eternal life in heaven.

Salvation has but one condition. There is only one thing the which if a man have, of whatever else he may be destitute, he cannot be lost; and the which, if he have it not, whatever else he may have, he cannot be saved, and that one thing is faith. "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. To affirm that the pardon of sin and the salvation of the soul is impossible without water baptism, and that post-baptismal sin cannot be forgiven without confession to a priest, is ritualism run mad, is to make the moral relations of an immortal spirit to the government of God, and the eternal destinies of God's image, dependent upon trifles—the whole thing is abhorrent to common sense and sound reason.

When God says, "repent and be baptized," or, "do this in remembrance of me," he utters a command. If he to whom the commandment comes voluntarily refuse obedience, he thereby perils eternal life. This act of disobedience may be the beginning of a life-time of persistence in sin—it even involves in itself alone the spirit of rebellion, which excludes from the kingdom of heaven. The innocent absence of water, bread, and wine can never damn a soul; but the intelligent rejection of the holy sacraments in voluntary disobedience to a divine command may.

Again, salvation and degrees of advancement in the scale of moral being are not the same thing. The former is conditioned upon faith. He that so believes in the divine existence, and in the rewardableness of worship as to come unto God, he that has the spirit of faith and a purpose of

righteousness, is saved. The latter is conditioned upon a proper improvement of the means of moral culture. Degrees of advancement in moral growth may be attained by persons enjoying and improving means of grace, that are not attainable by those deprived of these privileges. Eminently among the means of grace are the sacraments. Upon them certain blessings are conditioned; for the attainment of those blessings they are essential, they are necessary. What those blessings are need not be, perhaps cannot be, definitely specified.

The more specific discussion of the sacraments, which will soon be entered upon in these pages, will naturally point the reader in the direction in which those blessings are to be found.

## **THE VALIDITY OF THE SACRAMENTS.**

What is necessary to render the sacraments what they purport to be?

Evidently, that they accord with the teachings of the Scriptures. Whatever directions respecting them are given in the Word of God must be observed.

Without water authoritatively applied in the name of the Trinity, there is no baptism; without the eating of bread and drinking of wine in memory of Christ there is no Supper of the Lord. But it is manifest that these outward acts of using water, pronouncing the names of the holy Three, eating bread and drinking wine, may be performed in mockery and be sacrilegious. It is, therefore, requisite that the persons both administering and being administered to must intend to do what Christ commanded. Again, Christ commanded his disciples, whom he had ordained for this purpose, to baptize and administer the sacrament of the Supper; hence, it seems requisite that the ordinances be administered by persons set apart and authorized so to do; so that the forms of the sacraments being observed by persons not regularly authorized would not only be a violation of the order and harmony of the Church, but also such a neglect of the divine ordinance as would entirely vitiate the service; and yet

where the offices of the ministry can not be obtained, it would seem to be unquestionably the right and privilege of the laity to administer the ordinances in the best way possible to them, and that in that case the service would be entirely valid. We say, then, whenever the sacraments are observed by doing the things plainly prescribed in the Holy Scriptures, with a pure intention on the part of those participating therein to do what Christ commanded—the manner of the administration and all the attending circumstances being made to conform, so far as possibilities allow, to what the evident spirit and intent of the ordinance require—these services are valid sacraments, and will certainly be attended and followed by the spiritual blessings promised.

# CHAPTER 14: BAPTISM.

## 14.1. ITS NATURE.

I. BAPTISM is a sign of regeneration. "Ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead; and you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."

It is patent upon the surface of this passage that the writer considered the ancient circumcision as an outward sign of the inner purification by the Holy Spirit, a sign of "the circumcision made without hands," a sign, beyond all possible question, of regeneration. It is equally obvious that the writer of this passage considered baptism as a sign of the same thing. They who had been dead in sins had also through "the operation of God" been quickened, and this quickening was represented in their baptism. Mention is here made of justification having "forgiven you all trespasses." Of this we shall speak definitely further on. At present we direct our attention solely to regeneration as the thing signified, represented, symbolized, by the ordinance of baptism. On this point let another passage of Holy Writ be considered.

"Know ye not that se many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

In respect to the precise point now before us it is manifest that this

passage is perfectly parallel with the one quoted above. Regeneration is a resurrection from the dead, and that is represented by baptism. The testimony of John the Baptist respecting Christian baptism affirms the same thing: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire." The baptism of the Holy Ghost is in some cases specific—has reference to special bestowments, such as apostolic endowments; but in all cases it implies that renewal of our nature we call regeneration. And here in the testimony of the Baptist it may be taken as having special and sole reference to that work of the Spirit. Anyway, the text is proof that baptism is an outward sign of the Spirit's inward work on the souls of men; that circumcision under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations served the same purpose; that its office was to represent the inner purification of the soul by the Spirit's regenerating work, is evident from the following passage: "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God."

## 2. Baptism is a recognition of justification.

The common method of presenting the thought here intended is to say that baptism is the seal of our justification before God; or it is the seal of the covenant between God and man, wherein God has promised, on condition of repentance and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, to pardon our sins and accept us as his children. This view is sustained by several Scriptural considerations and forms of expression. The promise made to Abraham that in his seed all nations should be blessed, which promise was renewed unto Isaac, Jacob, and David, is frequently called in Scripture a covenant. This covenant, as typically fulfilled in the Mosaic dispensation is called the old covenant, and, as literally fulfilled by Christ, is called the new covenant.

Circumcision is called the sign and seal of the old covenant. Now, as baptism, under the new covenant, has the same office as circumcision under the old, it seems perfectly proper to call it the sign and seal of the new covenant. To our thought the important thing to be considered here is the thing signified by circumcision, whether it be called a sign or a seal,

or both, and that that thing is justification, is manifest from the following passage: Romans iv, 7-12, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also?

for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it reckoned? when he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised."

This passage requires no exegetical explanations; it speaks for itself.

Abraham was justified by faith long before he was circumcised. That rite in his case was simply an external recognition of his justification; of the fact, that his sins were forgiven, that faith was imputed to him for righteousness, that his sins were covered; that he was pardoned, justified—all of which expressions mean the same thing.

That baptism, under the new covenant, has reference to justification, as circumcision did under the old, will appear from the following Scriptures: Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Then said Peter unto them: repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now why tarriest thou; arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." John's baptism was unto repentance. Christ and the apostles preached unto the people that they should repent, believe, and be baptized. All references to the ordinance either expressly or impliedly connect it with initial salvation; it is always exponential of what results from the soul's first motions towards God, or is in recognition of salvation already begun.

3. Baptism is a recognition of adoption, or, more specifically, it is a ceremonial recognition of membership in the visible Church. Abraham was the father of the faithful; all believers were his spiritual seed, members of his household. "He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith; that he might be the father of all them that believe,"

whether circumcised or uncircumcised. Baptism is the sign of regeneration—

this is its primary import. It is also a recognition of the concomitants or prerequisites of regeneration; namely, justification and adoption.

Frequently, in the New Testament Scriptures, believers, considered in the aggregate, are called the body of Christ, of which he is the head. "Now are ye the body of Christ and members in particular. And he gave some apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." In I Corinthians xii, 13. we are said to become members of this body by baptism. "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." Membership in the body of Christ and in the family of God is the same thing. Adoption as the children of God is symbolized by initiation in the visible Church, and baptism is the ceremonial recognition of that initiation. "As many as believed, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father;" and this is that one Spirit by which we are baptized into the body of Christ, and become members one of another.

4. Baptism is a profession of faith. "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest; and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." This profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God has, in all the ages of Christian history, been the condition

on which baptism has been administered. But more than this is obviously implied. The candidate professes to be justified or to be seeking justification, to be regenerated, born again, or to be seeking renewal and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Now, such a profession is a profession of faith in all the fundamental doctrines of salvation by Christ. It is a profession of faith in the doctrine of actual guiltiness, of natural depravity, of atonement, of pardon, and regeneration through the merits of Christ, and of salvation as conditioned upon repentance and faith. Again, the candidate is seeking membership in the Church, and thereby professes faith in the Church as a divine institution, and in the obligations it imposes as divine requirements; in a word, baptism is a profession of Christian faith.

5. Baptism is a recognition of covenant obligations. If the idea of a seal is to be insisted on, then, as on the one hand, God by baptism sets his seal to his promise of pardon, adoption, regeneration, and all the offices of the Spirit needful for salvation, so, on the other, the candidate, by the same ordinance, sets his seal to the covenant, and thereby pledges his fidelity; he promises to "renounce the devil and all his works; the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same; and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that he will not follow or be led by them." He further promises to "obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life." That baptism is a ceremonial by which the candidate acknowledges his obligations of Christian duty to God and man, by which he voluntarily accepts those obligations, and professes a purpose to keep them diligently all the days of his life, is not a matter of doubt or controversy; that the ordinance is significant of covenant obligations, of promises of spiritual blessings on the part of God, and of pledges of faithfulness in duty on the part of man, is as manifest as that it has any significance whatever.

As I see it, the idea of its being a seal to a covenant may not be accepted as important. The thing intended is obvious and obviously true, and this is sufficient.

6. Baptism is a means of grace. The worship of God in spirit and in truth by any persons, at any time, in any place, under any circumstances, is religiously profitable to those who participate therein. The services of

God's house, either of prayer or praise; of reading and expounding the Word of God, or hearing it read and expounded; all devotional exercises, ordinary as well as extraordinary, general as well as special, are means of grace to those who use them with a Christian purpose and intent. But baptism is a special service, in that it has a special and definite intent, in that it is never to be repeated. It is a service once for a life-time, in that it is significant of what is a crisis in the history of an immortal spirit. It, more than any other one service of man's earthly history signifies what is determinative of eternal destiny. Its condition is a profession of that act of will which chooses God and truth and duty, which rejects self, error, and disobedience, which makes choice of the greatest good as the supreme end of being; that act of voluntary choice which surrenders all to Christ; that believing which if a man do he shall be saved, and if he do it not, he will be damned. Now, it may be reasonably anticipated that that service of religion which is divinely appointed and ordained to be exponential of such vastly important acts and interests, is not only a service in itself profoundly solemn and impressive, but also one that is productive of results commensurate with its momentous significance; and such, without doubt, is ever true of it in all cases where the service is properly observed. "Believe and be baptized and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost. I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Water baptism is emblematic of baptism with the Spirit, and is, when accordant with divine intent, either attended or speedily followed by the outpouring of the Spirit. Spiritual supernatural blessings, even the blessings of salvation and good promise of eternal life, come to the trusting, believing one who is Scripturally baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

7. Baptism is an act of obedience. The apostles ever exhorted their congregations to repent and be baptized. Having been inspired and authorized to inaugurate the Gospel dispensation, their injunctions have a divine authority, and their command is a divine command. The commission given them by our Lord to disciple all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, implies a command to the people to be baptized. It is in this sense that baptism is "the answer of a good conscience;" it is an act that obligates the conscience, an act in respect to which the subject has a sense of duty. Of

course these remarks have no applications to persons who are ignorant of the Gospel; and it is not intended to say that there can be no exceptions among persons having a Christian education. For though it is difficult to see how a person with common intelligence, educated in a Christian land, with the Bible in his hands, can fail to understand that it is his duty to enter the Christian Church by its initiatory rite, yet it is not competent for man to affirm the impossibility of such a case. Possibly an honest man may fail to see that it is his duty to be baptized. We are, however, warranted by the nature of the case in affirming that, though there may be exceptions, those exceptions cannot be very numerous. This view of the matter makes it one of momentous interest.

When God says, Do this, or Do that, whether the reasons for the command be obvious, or whether the only reason known to the subject for the doing is that it is enjoined by a divine command, there is nothing left but Implicit obedience or positive rebellion. It may be affirmed, in a judgment of charity even, that unbaptized persons, living in a Christian community, having the common means of attaining a knowledge of duty, are living, in respect to this one thing at least, in disobedience to a divine command. On the other hand, he who intelligently, believably, and sincerely takes upon himself the obligations of the baptismal covenant, and receives the consecrated water, administered by an authorized administrator, devoutly applied in the name of the Holy Trinity, performs an act of reverent pious duty, an act of positive obedience to a divinely given command.

## **14.2. THE EFFICACY OF BAPTISM.**

We have said above that the efficacy of the sacraments is wholly supernatural. The importance of this thought to the cause of Christian truth requires that the reader be reminded thereof distinctly in this connection, and justifies articulate statement even at the expense of some repetition.

There is nothing saving in externals. Neither the water nor the words of the administrator nor the professions of the candidate have any power in themselves. The whole doctrine of efficacy "*ex opere operato*" is a fiction.

The intentions of the administrator, when the ordinance is considered abstractly, may be regarded as an element in the validity of the ordinance, but it cannot be a bar to its efficacy. The purpose and intent of the candidate is a condition, but not the cause of efficacy. The faith of the recipient is an essential indispensable condition on which the Holy Spirit makes the ordinance a channel for the communication of his blessings; but it is not the source or cause of any beneficial results. In no good sense is the doctrine of efficacy "*ex opere operantis*" true. With the above explanation—

or, in other words, when it is affirmed that the candidate's faith is a condition of efficacy—there may be no harm in the expression; but standing alone it is liable to be understood in a sense in which the doctrine is not true. It is of but little or no service any way, is an embarrassment at best, and therefore, though sustained by high authority, it ought to be rejected.

Whenever there are any saving results from the administration of the ordinance of baptism, those results come directly and wholly from the work of the Spirit, and not at all as cause from any force inhering in the ordinance itself, or from any work, either of the Church or its officers administering it, or of the person receiving it.

### **14.3. VALIDITY OF BAPTISM.**

The question of the validity of an ordinance is the question whether it be administered in accordance with the requirements of the revealed will of God. Baptism, to be baptism, must be such as the Bible requires. All agree that it is essential to Christian baptism that water be applied in the name of the Holy Trinity, by Christian believers, with the purpose and intent to do what God commanded when he said, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Such a service performed in mockery, or by a heathen to a heathen in ignorance, would not be Christian baptism. All agree that the order and harmony of the Church require that baptism be administered by persons chosen and ordained for this purpose; so that where the services of the ministry are available it would be wrong for others to obtrude themselves into this office by attempting to administer this ordinance. And yet all agree that where the services of the ministry cannot be obtained the ordinance would be valid, though administered by a layman.

The only controversies in the Church worthy of special notice as to the validity of baptism have respect to the subjects or persons baptized and to the mode. These have assumed such importance, and have occupied so large a place in Christian discussions, that they require special treatment. They will be discussed in the two following chapters.

# CHAPTER 15: SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

ALL are agreed that persons of sufficient age to understand, and who have been instructed sufficiently to know the nature and design of the ordinance; who profess to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of men; who desire to receive baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity; and promise to renounce the world, and to keep God's commandments, are proper persons to receive this holy ordinance and may be baptized. The baptism of such persons by the proper officers of the Church, and in a proper manner or mode, will be recognized by all Christians as valid. So far, then, as the subjects of baptism are concerned, the only question left for discussion is, Whether infants are proper subjects of Christian baptism. We affirm that they are; and, in support of this affirmation adduce the following considerations: *Argument First.*— Infants are entitled to Christian baptism, because they are entitled to that which is signified by it. The posterity of the first pair come into conscious being under redemption. For the sake and merits of our Lord Jesus Christ every son and daughter of Adam is born into the world in a condition to be justified, regenerated, adopted, and made an heir of eternal life, and those dying in infancy come into actual possession of all these blessings. This is sufficiently evidenced by our Lord's words: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Now we argue that if, for any cause, they are entitled to the thing itself, are entitled to that which is symbolized, represented, they certainly, and for a stronger reason, are entitled to the sign or symbol thereof. If Infant children, by the sufferings and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are subjects for the kingdom of heaven, are entitled to, and, in case of death, come into the actual possession of regeneration and its concomitant blessings of justification and adoption; then, certainly, they are entitled to that baptism which is the visible outward sign of these benefits of atonement promised and secured to them in the covenant of grace.

If it please better, instead of saying "*born in a condition*," we will say born into the world *sustaining such relations* that they may, by the grace of God, be prepared for and admitted to the kingdom of heaven. Then the argument stands thus: Children are born into the world sustaining, through the atonement, such relations to the moral government of God as that they are proper subjects for God's regenerating grace. They may, now, without any condition required on their part, be actually regenerated, may be born anew by the Holy Ghost, may be sanctified and admitted to heaven—being thus proper subjects for regeneration, they are proper subjects for baptism, the outward sign by which regeneration is signified, represented, symbolized. Now, it is obvious that this argument is determinative or it is nothing; and if it is nothing, then there is no other argument that can be of any avail, for, if the significance of the ordinance has no application to infants, then, in their case, the ordinance would have no meaning, and would be only a senseless service, and no argument can make a senseless service a service of any sense.

Is the premise admitted? Are infants dying in infancy admitted to heaven? Is their inherited nature such as that they require to be born again in order to fit them for their heavenly inheritance? If so, then they are born into the world, sustaining such relations as that they are proper subjects for regeneration. So much for the premise. Is the inference valid?

Admitting that they are proper subjects for the thing signified, does it follow that they are proper subjects for the sign thereof? To our thought the conclusion is resistless.

The probable reason why this argument is not determinative with some is the assumption that baptism supposes the actual existence of the thing signified at the time of its administration. It is assumed that all persons to whom a valid baptism is administered have been regenerated previous to baptism—in other words, it is assumed that none are proper subjects of Christian baptism but regenerated persons. This assumption is favored by the common custom. In our times most adult persons delay their baptism till some time after their conversion, and, as a consequence, there is a widespread impression in the public mind that for a person not assured of his regeneration to assume the solemn responsibilities of the baptismal covenant is presumptuous. Some theologians, even, have

carried this impression to the extent of inferring from the validity of infant baptism the doctrine of infant regeneration. Again, perhaps from the obvious fact that the apostles did baptize persons whose mental status as to regeneration they did not and could not know, the Roman Church and the high-churchmen of the English establishment infer—any way, whether it is an inference from the apostolic practice or not, they do affirm—that baptism "*ex opere operato*" effects regeneration; and others, prominently the Campbellites of our times, affirm that baptism is itself regeneration.

Now all this we affirm is an assumption. Baptism and circumcision may as well be anticipatory as reflexive. In the case of Abraham, "circumcision was a seal of the righteousness he had being yet uncircumcised;" he was justified years before he was circumcised. Most adult persons receiving the ordinance of baptism in our times are supposed to be regenerated and born anew; and their birth by water is the sign of their birth by the Spirit, which they have enjoyed, being yet unbaptized. Baptism is sometimes reflexive, and we affirm that it may as well be anticipatory. But the question is, *Is it?* We affirm it is, for the following reasons:

First. The Scriptures frequently speak of baptism as the antecedent of saving grace: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Save yourselves [or, be ye saved] from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added about three thousand souls. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved [or, such as were saved]. Now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Second. If regeneration be a *sine qua non* prerequisite to valid baptism, then baptism is conditioned upon what God does, and not upon what man does. Again, it is such that the administrator can never know whether it has been fulfilled or not, and therefore to him it is the same as no condition whatever. And again, the candidate cannot himself know whether he is a proper subject for baptism unless the Spirit of God specially reveal to him that fact. It is true that whatever be the condition

of baptism there is a liability to mistake in judging of it. Philip baptized Simon the Sorcerer, to whom Peter said: "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter. I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." But if regeneration be a prerequisite to valid baptism, then baptisms not valid must be of fearfully frequent occurrence.

Thirdly. The apostles baptized persons whose status as to regeneration they could not know. They uniformly preached that the people every one should repent and be baptized, and in all cases they immediately baptized all whose hearts the Lord had touched so that they gave heed to the apostles' words.

The three thousand on the day of Pentecost is an example. If such as Nicodemus marveled at the announcement of the doctrine of the new birth, certainly it is not supposable that the multitudes to whom the apostles preached were so instructed as to enter fully into the salvation of the Gospel on the first proclamation thereof; nor is it supposable that by any catechetical instruction they could so speedily be prepared for baptism, if they must before its administration give to the administrator satisfactory evidence of their having been born of the Spirit.

Fourthly. A profession of faith in Jesus Christ and of a purpose of righteousness, with a desire to be baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, and not a profession of regeneration, was, always has been, and is, the condition and the only condition required of candidates for baptism. This is so obviously a matter of fact that it requires no discussion.

Baptism is the sign of regeneration. The new birth which baptism symbolizes may be antecedent, contemporary, or subsequent to the sign which outwardly represents it. Any adult person who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ with a heart unto righteousness, and thus places himself in a condition to be justified, regenerated, and adopted as a child of God—in other words, any person who is a sincere believing seeker of salvation through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—is a proper subject for Christian baptism.

Infants are in the same condition, or, if it pleases, sustain the same relations as do adult candidates for baptism. Therefore they are proper

candidates for the same ordinance. The difference between the two is, the one is, and the other is not, guilty of actual voluntary sin; and therefore the one has, and the other has not, need of voluntary repentance and faith in order to pardon. When the one, by repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, has returned to his infantile conditions and relations, has been converted and has become as a little child, then both are alike entitled to salvation through Christ. Dying in that state, they would alike ascend to heaven. Living, they may alike receive the sign of regeneration; and living faithful to its obligations, they will alike sooner or later come into actual possession of the thing signified by their baptism. If the adult believer has received the new birth previous to his baptism, this makes no difference as to the significance of the rite, nor as to the conditions on which the rite may be administered.

We have said above that this argument is determinative or it is nothing.

To our thought infant baptism is not only adequately authorized, but also divinely required by our Lord's words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Here is the warrant and authority for the baptism of infants and for their admission to Church fellowship. If this be not enough nothing more need be said.

But in conformity to custom we proceed to

*Argument Second.* It is a universal conviction of mankind that children are born into the civil, ecclesiastical, and social status of their parents; that all the obligations imposed, and all the rights and privileges conferred, by the civil, ecclesiastical, and social relations of the parents are, in the absence of any thing to the contrary, naturally transmitted to their children.

This conviction among the Jews was confirmed and strengthened by positive statute, divinely enjoined. Their children were by birthright entitled to all the common privileges of the Jewish Church. They were circumcised on the eighth day after birth; and, except in cases of forfeiture by bad conduct, they were considered as members of the Church, and entitled to all its privileges from birth to death. Now, if our Lord had instituted a religion and a Church from whose privileges

children were excluded, it is reasonable to expect that such an exclusion would have been distinctly stated, and that its reception among the people would have been such as would have received some notice in history.

The abrogation of circumcision caused a commotion among Jewish believers, of which we have ample record. Now, if with the rite the thing signified by it had also been taken away and nothing substituted in its place, and if even the baptism given to Gentile proselytes were refused to their own children, it is most obvious that a change so abhorrent to a parent's religious regards for his children would have received an attention of which history would have given some information. In the absence of any such notice in the history of the times, it is fairly inferable that children sustained a relation to the Christian Church similar and equivalent to that they sustained in the Jewish Church. As in the one they received in infancy the rite of circumcision, which recognized their relation to God and his Church, so in the other, without doubt, they received the rite of baptism, which under the new dispensation signified the same thing that circumcision did under the old.

*Argument Third.* It is highly probable that the apostles baptized infants; it is extremely improbable that they did not.

The arguments above, to our thought, render it certain that they did; but here we claim only high probability, and add to the probability derived from the considerations given above the recorded fact that they baptized whole households. Three families are distinctly mentioned—Lydia's, the jailer's, and that of Stephanas; and they are mentioned in a manner that indicates that the practice was a common one. Of course, it is possible that there were no young children in any of these families; but it is manifestly probable that there were young children at least in some of them—possibly in all. It is obviously a very preposterous assumption to *affirm* that there were none; and to *suppose* there were none is to make an extremely improbable supposition.

But again: infant baptism in the Christian Church had a beginning some time. When was it? If not in the time of the apostles, then, when it was introduced it was an innovation, and would have excited a controversy of

which we should have heard something; but the pages of history do not furnish even the appearance of an intimation that the practice of infant baptism was an innovation. On the contrary, there was not a Christian Church on earth for eleven hundred years after the birth of Christ that did not practice infant baptism, and for fifteen hundred years it was never opposed by the considerations that are now urged against it. The first opposition of which ecclesiastical history informs us was made by Tertullian, who lived and labored as a Christian minister in the beginning of the third century. But he never suggested that the rite was at any time an innovation; never intimated that it was not practiced by the apostles. He assumed that baptism is a condition of pardon, and that post-baptismal sins are eminently heinous, if not unpardonable, and on these assumptions he based an inference that baptism should be deferred to a late period in life; but he himself did not practically adhere to his conclusions; he practiced and urged the baptism of children who were of sufficient age to receive instruction. All agree that infant baptism was a prevalent practice in the time of Tertullian, A. D. 200, and that there is a total absence of any evidence that its introduction was an innovation at any time between the days of the apostles and the times of Tertullian. Irenaus, A. D. 125, alludes to the practice in a manner implying its unquestioned existence; and Justin Martyr, who wrote within forty years after the death of the Apostle John, who doubtless lived and received his youthful education before the apostle's death, and who must have conversed with many of those who had had personal knowledge of apostolic times, customs, and usages, says, "Many persons among us, of both sexes, some sixty and some seventy years old, who had been made disciples to Christ in their infancy, do continue uncorrupted."

Now, in view of all these considerations, we insist that the probability that the apostles, both by precept and example, did authorize infant baptism in the Christian Church, amounts to a moral certainty.

We close this discussion by repeating what we have said above, that the consideration which determines that infants are entitled to baptism is found in the fact that by virtue of their relation to the atonement they are entitled to that which the rite signifies. They are in a condition to be regenerated by the Holy Ghost; therefore they are in a condition to receive the outward sign of that inward regeneration.

Whose children may be baptized? The idea that baptism is the seal of a covenant whose terms are "to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," gives countenance to the idea that none but the children of believers are entitled to baptism; and the idea of a believer, in the minds of many, is the equivalent to the idea of a Church member; so that the practice of many Christian Churches limits the baptism of children to those whose parents, one or both, are members of the Church. However, adopted children and orphans, though not the children of believing parents, are admitted to baptism in case believing sponsors assume the responsibility of their religious education. It is manifest, that if the idea of a seal be nothing more than a rhetorical illustration; and if baptism be considered as to its essential character as an outward sign of an inward regeneration; and if children are entitled to the sign because they are entitled to the thing signified, then this restriction is groundless.

Children are to be baptized because of their relation to Christ, and not because of their relations to their parents. If infidel parents were to present their children for baptism in mockery—a very unsupposable supposition—

any Christian minister would refuse to administer the ordinance; not because the wickedness of the parents deprived their children of the children's interest in Christ, but because their wickedness would be a bar to a proper administration. If parents of a good moral character desiring, with apparent sincerity, Christian baptism for their children, and honestly prepared to promise, as required by the ritual, to give due attention to their religious education, though they themselves are not members of any Christian Church, and are not professors of saving faith, should present their children for baptism—

a not very supposable supposition—I see not to the contrary but that, in such a case, the children may be baptized, and that because baptism belongs to them for Christ's sake, and because the purpose of the parents in a judgment of charity being supposed to be sincere and honest, every bar to a proper administration is removed.

# CHAPTER 16: MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Let every adult person and the parents of every child to be baptized have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring." (Methodist Discipline.) DOES the validity of baptism depend at all upon the mode of its administration? Suppose it be admitted that the manner in which the apostles baptized their disciples is with sufficient distinctness described in the New Testament; again, let us suppose that persons honestly interpret the given descriptions incorrectly, and find in the Scriptures a mode different from the true one; and again, suppose such persons do administer the ordinance in their incorrect method, honestly intending to do, and supposing that they do do, the thing commanded in the words "repent and be baptized,"—is such a baptism invalid? Are the persons so baptized unbaptized persons, and not within the pale of the visible Church? Who will affirm that they are? If, then, immersionists will concede to those who differ from them honesty in their difference, they ought to admit them to fellowship in the Church; they ought on the ground of a mistaken judgment to excuse the error. Again, if we concede, as above, that the mode of baptism is prescribed in the New Testament, and suppose that certain persons do clearly and correctly interpret the given instructions, then it is plain that such persons are not baptized unless they follow the given prescriptions; to them nothing else is baptism but that thing which they find in the Word of God.

But why would a so-called baptism by any other method be to them invalid? Plainly, because the service performed would not be the answer of a good conscience; it would not be doing what they thought was their duty; nay, more, it would be a positive refusal to obey a divine command. But does this make the mode itself essential to the validity of the ordinance? Plainly not, on any other supposition than that the mode is so clearly and definitely prescribed that it cannot be innocently mistaken. Is the mode so revealed in the Scriptures that to mistake it is censurable? that to mistake it justly forfeits the rights and privileges of the visible

Church? To ask this question is to our thought to answer it. It is so palpably patent that men equally intelligent and equally honest do differ as to the question whether the apostles uniformly practiced one method, and if so what that method was, that we deem it impertinent even to suggest that the question of mode is determinative of the question of validity.

What excuse is there for exclusiveness in such a matter as this? Baptism is a sign of regeneration. Water is essential to bodily cleanliness; the agency of the Holy Spirit is essential to moral purity. Here is a resemblance which renders the sign a suitable representative of the thing signified; but if there be any resemblance between the manner in which water is applied to the body and the manner in which the Spirit operates on the mind no mortal is able to discover it. We have, then, this case: there is nothing in the ordinance itself, beyond the resemblance between a sign and the thing signified, that renders it at all important. The only reason why it is in any way connected with the individual's personal salvation is that it is divinely commanded, and is, therefore, the answer of a good conscience.

A person who so reads his Bible as to come to a conviction that baptism is immersion does right to be immersed; he does wrong if he refuses, because in so doing he refuses to do what he understands is required. He does right in endeavoring to convince his fellow-men that it is their duty to be immersed. If it is right that the Christian Church should be divided into denominations founded upon difference of opinion in minor matters, then it may be right that immersionists should separate themselves and form a denominational Church upon the single affirmation that baptism is immersion; but for such to assume that none others are members of Christ's visible Church is preposterous. Exclusiveness founded upon difference of opinion in such a matter as the mode of baptism is wholly without excuse; yea, more, in the light of Christian charity and of mutual good will among the members of Christ's body, it is eminently censurable.

How much must be conceded to immersionists as to the merits of the question whether or not the apostles uniformly practiced immersion? To a reader of the common version of our English Bible the fact that John baptized in Jordan, that he is said to have baptized in Enon because there

was much water there; that it is said that when Jesus was baptized he went up straightway out of the water; that Philip and the eunuch are said to have gone down both into the water, and to have come up out of the water. And that all baptized persons are said to be buried with Christ in baptism,—very naturally suggests the idea that baptism required a large quantity of water. And if the idea of immersion be in the reader's mind previous to his reading, this language is well adapted to impress his mind with the idea that baptism and immersion are synonymous terms. So much is conceded; but it is not conceded that a thorough examination of all the facts involved in these several cases, and of all the facts involved in the merits of the case itself, necessitates in every honest mind a conviction that immersion was the only mode of baptism practiced in apostolic times.

Was the apostolic practice uniform? were the New Testament baptisms always the same as to the mode of their administration? An *a priori* Judgment would naturally affirm that they were; in the light of thought, it would be an unwarranted assumption to affirm that, beyond slight variations in unimportant particulars to accommodate varying circumstances, the apostles practiced different modes of baptism. In the absence of any thing to the contrary, an *a priori* judgment would affirm that all probabilities favor the idea of a uniform mode. But on the supposition that baptism, as to its form, was always the same during apostolic times, we are at once met with this difficult question, When, how, by whom, in what manner, came the practice to vary? what is the history of the innovation? It is reasonable to suppose that in such a case the pages of history would furnish the means of settling the question.

Added to this, we know that among the Jewish ceremonies there were what St.

Paul calls "divers baptisms." We know also that at least the purification of things, such as vessels, tables, couches, must have differed as to mode from the purification of persons, unless all was done by sprinkling; and that all these ceremonial religious purifications were alike called baptisms, whether they were of persons or of things.

In view of these last mentioned considerations, the antecedent

probability of a uniform method disappears, and it becomes quite probable that the apostles varied their mode of applying the baptismal water as convenience required; or, in other words, it is highly probable that in apostolic times the mode of baptism was not considered essential to the validity of the ordinance. It is not, therefore, required of those who deny that immersion was the only mode to prove that some other mode, as sprinkling or pouring, was solely practiced. It may be that then, as now, different modes were common.

The burden of proof rests upon those who affirm a uniform practice.

Did the apostles immerse the whole body of their candidates in water? or did they from small vessels pour water upon them? or did they from their own hands or from a hyssop branch sprinkle water upon them? or did they sometimes baptize their candidates in one of these ways and sometimes in another?

Immersionists affirm that the evidence in the case proves not only the fact that the apostles did uniformly immerse, but also that immersion is essential to the validity of the ordinance; so that it is, as they affirm, universally true that where there is no immersion there is no baptism.

The other party to this controversy do not affirm a uniform method, nor, indeed, a diversity of method, but affirm that the evidence in the case is not adequate to prove the position of the immersionist; specially do they deny that any mode is essential to validity. Among those, allowing the validity of either method, probably, most have a personal preference—some preferring one mode, and others another. No Church, as such, except the Baptist, requires any particular form of baptism as a *sine qua non* condition of membership; all, at least in theory, allow the candidate a choice of the manner in which he will receive the ordinance.

We have now come face to face on the question at issue. Does the evidence in the case prove immersion? Is the New Testament word *baptize* a synonym of the English word *immerse*? Is the formula, baptism equals immersion, true? In all cases where it is doubtful what a writer or speaker means by the words he uses, the question must be determined, if at all, by the circumstances of the case, or by his use of the same words in other places, or by both of these methods. If the meaning of New

Testament terms be determined decisively it must be by New Testament use. Collateral and confirmatory evidence may be derived from classical use, from use in the Septuagint, and in the Apocrypha.

As the main issue has respect to New Testament use, and because, as we see it, the issue is the same, whether we consult the Septuagint or the New Testament, we shall content ourselves with only a few illustrations from these other sources, and depend wholly upon the argument from the New Testament for the support of the positions we shall attempt to maintain. Perhaps another remark, before proceeding, may not be useless. To our thought the question at issue receives, no essential aid from scholarly attainments—it is a question of plain common sense. The man who understands common English, and is competent to form a correct judgment from the facts in a given case, is qualified to sit in judgment on the case before us. For instance, all the facts attending the conversion and admission to Church membership of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost being considered, we affirm that it is competent for a man of ordinary power of judgment to determine for himself, from these facts themselves, whether it is probable or possible that those three thousand persons were, one by one, wholly immersed in water.

There can be no question as to whether the words *bapto* and *baptizo* are or are not both of them used in different senses in the classics. The former signifies to dip; to dye by dipping; or to dye without regard to the mode—as when a lake is said to be baptized by the blood shed in it, or a garment baptized by coloring matter dropping on it; to gild; to glaze; to wet, moisten, or wash; to temper, as when hot iron is tempered by plunging it in water, or by pouring oil upon it; to imbue, as when the mind is said to be baptized with fantasies. The latter signifies to immerse; to overflow with water; the seashore is baptized by the rising tide; to wet thoroughly; to overwhelm, as when men are said to be baptized with wine, that is, intoxicated, or when a boy is baptized with puzzling questions. There is, then, no dispute as to whether these, with their paronymous words, are used differently; but the question is, In what does the difference consist? or how is this difference in use to be accounted for? Immersionists affirm that these terms are specific, that their primary and literal sense is to immerse, and that all other uses are secondary and figurative. Anti-immersionists affirm that the terms are generic, like the

terms wet, wash, dye, moisten, and many others. As the word *wet* does not, in itself, express the method by which a drenched condition was produced, whether by plunging into water, or whether by water being poured or sprinkled upon the wet person or thing; so the word baptize does not, in itself, express the method by which the person baptized came into the condition of being baptized. If the sentence containing the word specify the method, it must be by other words than the word itself. In this way of putting the question, the parties to the controversy stand as before, face to face on the merits of the case; and the only method of settlement is a common sense examination of the passages in which the words occur, and the inquiry whether their contexts favor the one theory or the other.

Illustrations from the Septuagint.—In Leviticus xiv we have “the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing.” The priest is required to command that a bird be killed, and that cedar wood, scarlet, hyssop, and a living bird be dipped in the blood of the bird that was killed. The word here rendered dipped is, in the Septuagint, rendered baptized, and this proves that the translator of that version did not consider baptism the same as immersion, for it is preposterous to suppose that all the things mentioned could be immersed in the blood of a single bird. In the story of Nebuchadnezzar the same translators say that his body was baptized with the dews of heaven. Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman, the Syrian leper, instructing him to wash seven times in Jordan, and the Septuagint says he went and baptized himself seven times in Jordan. This might have been by immersion, but it shows that the words wash and baptize are here used synonymously.

In the Apocrypha, Judith, a Jewish lady, young, beautiful, and wealthy, is said to have gone to the Assyrian camp and promised to aid the commander in the conquest of her country. The Assyrian general treated her with favor. At night she was permitted to resort to the fountain for purification; and the text says, :she baptized herself in the camp at a fountain of water.” This proves nothing positively; but it is quite improbable that lady of distinction used, as a bathing place, a public fountain in the midst of a camp filled with soldiers. Those who gave the Greek rendering to the Apocrypha without doubt here used the word baptized in a generic sense—the method of purifying is not specifically

given, but the probabilities are all against immersion. Again, in Ecclesiasticus, chapter xxxiv, we have this passage: "He that washeth himself from a dead body, and toucheth it again, what availeth his washing?"

In the Greek version this passage is rendered, "He that baptizeth himself."

The law of cleansing from contact with a dead body is given in Numbers, chapter xix, from which it is evident that the ceremony of purification in this case consisted chiefly in, or rather the essential part of the ceremony was performed by, sprinkling with a hyssop branch. Put these two things together—the ceremony, a service of purification according to the Mosaic law, was performed by sprinkling water upon the persons and things to be purified, and the translators called this a baptism. A notable example of the use of the words in question may be found in the writings of Origen. He called the pouring of the barrels of water upon the altar in the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, a baptism of the wood. Origen was born at Alexandria, A. D. 185. He is said to be "the father of Biblical criticism and exegesis in Christendom." He certainly knew how to use the Greek language, and could not mistake the proper use of so prominent a Christian term as *baptizo*. The wood was thoroughly drenched—this is the primary meaning of the word. The mode of its becoming drenched, was not the immersion of the wood in water, but the pouring of water upon the wood.

#### NEW TESTAMENT USE.

1. *John's Baptism*.—"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. And many Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism; and John preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me. I indeed have baptized you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. And Jesus came from Nazareth to Galilee and was baptized of John in Jordan; and straightway coming up out of the water he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. After

these things" [occurrences at Jerusalem, the cleansing of the temple, the conversation with Nicodemus, *et ceteras*] "came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them and baptized, and John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized.

Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying, and they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, baptizeth, and all men come unto him. When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples) he left Judea and departed again into Galilee." The above quotations give us all the information we have respecting John's baptisms and the baptisms administered by Christ through his disciples previous to his crucifixion.

These, whether by John or by the disciples of Christ, were evidently the same as to nature, intent, and form. They are important, inasmuch as it is evident, that so far as the mode is concerned, they were the same as was practiced afterward by the Church in apostolic times.

Respecting John's baptism, we affirm, first, That whatever it was, it was in general accordance with some sort of baptism practiced by the Jews in those times and previously. More briefly, John's baptism was a Jewish rite.

John was a Jew, and had no thought of being anything else; he was a reformer, but not an innovator. He knew, to be sure, that he was the forerunner of the promised Messiah—but the coming Messiah was an object of Jewish hopes—to his own thought he was wholly in the line of the Jewish religion. It is not, therefore, supposable that so prominent apart of his ministrations as baptism was an innovation. Whatever, therefore, his baptism might have been, it was a religious ceremonial of common practice among the Jews. This is made still more evident from the popularity of his baptism. All the people, with some Pharisees and Sadducees, were, without demur or question, baptized of him.

The only controversy of which we have any record is that between "some of John's disciples and the Jews" (the best manuscripts use the singular—

a Jew) about purifying; that is, as we understand it, about the baptisms by John and by Christ's disciples; and the point in controversy had respect to the question which was superior. John's disciples reported the controversy to their master, and he at once decided it by reminding them that he had himself told them that Christ was mightier than he. With this exception, which has no bearing at all on the point now before us, no objections were ever made to John's baptism—all the people believed him to be a prophet of Jehovah, sent to reform the people and bring them back from their wanderings to the proper observance of the Mosaic law. That John's baptism was a Jewish rite is further evident from the fact that Christ himself received it; and gave as a reason why he should do so, that "thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Jesus, as a Jew, was circumcised, he attended the Passover, worshiped in the temple, and received John's baptism. The righteousness which he fulfilled by this service could be nothing else than the righteousness of fulfilling the requirements of the Jewish code. Christ's baptism, then, was in conformity with a Jewish right.

We remark, secondly, in respect to John's baptism, that there is a strong probability that it was not by immersion, because there is nothing in the Old Testament that even intimates that the Jews were ever baptized by such a mode. There was no provision either in the tabernacle, in the wilderness, or in the temple at Jerusalem, for a baptistery. A brazen laver was provided, in which the priests were to wash their hands and their feet before offering sacrifices. There is no allusion in the ceremonial law to any practice bearing even a remote resemblance to anything like modern immersions. On the contrary, we know that "purifying"—the name given to John's baptism in the controversy above alluded to between his disciples and the Jews, in the case of purification from contact with a dead body (see Numbers xix)—was performed by sprinkling water with a hyssop branch. The purifying of the leper was also by sprinkling the blood of the slain bird upon the person to be cleansed. The Psalmist says, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean;" and St. Paul says,

"When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves, and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people; moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels

of the ministry; and almost all things are, by the law, purged with blood." The point made here is, that "purifying," which was the idea of John's baptism, whether it be by water or by blood, was performed by sprinkling. So far as the mode of purifying, according to Jewish customs, was concerned, there was nothing that even looked towards a modern immersion. But it may be said that immersion was introduced into the practice of proselyte baptism some time during the four hundred years that intervened between the time of Malachi and the coming of Christ. Perhaps it was; but there is no proof to that effect, and it is therefore an unwarranted assumption to affirm it. And besides, those who came to John's baptism were not proselytes, but natural-born Jews.

That John's baptism was not immersion I infer, thirdly, from the vast number he is said to have baptized. Dr. Hibbard, in his work on Baptism, quotes reliable authorities on the population of Palestine in the times of John, and determines that it could not be less than six millions. He maintains that "Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan," must mean a major part of the people, but puts it at one-half—three millions. John's ministry did not last more than nine months; the Doctor puts it at ten. He allows six hours a day for six days in the week during which John baptized; and from these data makes it appear that there were two thousand two hundred and two persons baptized each hour, or more than one every two seconds. Now, we may divide this number by two, and then by two again, and the result will still remain an impossibility; for no man can immerse one by one five hundred persons in an hour. But these figures aside, and allowing that the words of the evangelists, namely, "There went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and all the region round about Jordan, and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins," are an indefinite hyperbole; yet we affirm that those words are criminally misleading if there were not more persons baptized by John than one man could by any possibility immerse within the time given to those baptisms.

Deduct the Sabbaths, the time of bad weather, the time necessary for rest; food, and other personal attentions, and the time necessary for public preaching and private counsel; or take the time any man can endure to stand in three feet of water and constantly immerse the people by

plunging them wholly under water and then lifting them up out of it; and in either case you will obtain a result that renders it impossible that an accurate, not to say inspired, historian should say that all the people of Judea were one by one baptized in this manner by one single man.

That John's baptism was not immersion I infer, fourthly, from the fact that he himself compared it unto the baptism of the Holy Ghost. "I indeed have baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

It is not claimed here that John foresaw the scenes of Pentecost; but it is claimed that he knew something of the Spirit's influence upon the hearts and minds of men. And beyond all doubt it is of this baptism, the Spirit's saving, purifying presence and power in the human heart that he here speaks.

But suppose him to speak of the Spirit's baptism in any sense in which it is real and actual, the argument is the same. There is no such thing as an application of man to the Spirit; but in any spiritual baptism the Spirit is applied to the man. John said, I indeed have administered to you the outward sign of purification; but he shall administer the inward cleansing. Is it said that the preposition "*en*" should have been translated "*in?*" we reply, The use of "*en*" before the words "Holy Ghost" proves that here and elsewhere "*with*" properly translates the particle *en* in all such construction as is here used.

To suggest that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is by immersion is to strain a point to an extent that is positively ludicrous. The thing signified bears no resemblance to the sign employed if that sign was immersion. Perhaps John's comparison did not relate at all to the mode of the baptisms; if so, this argument goes for nothing. But to our thought there is upon the surface of the comparison such a parallelism as includes the mode; if so, John's baptism was not immersion.

*Objections.* It is asked, Why did John baptize in Jordan? And how do you account for it that it is said that he baptized in Enon because there was much water there, if baptism does not require a large quantity of water, or if it is by sprinkling or pouring? We reply, Large out-door assemblies, remote from home, and continuing together for days, require abundant

water for drinking, for cooking, and for cleanliness; and especially are large quantities required for the beasts that bear the people and their burdens from their homes to the place of gathering on such occasions. In Palestine places sufficiently supplied with water for large encampments were not numerous.

During the height of John's popularity, probably no locality except the banks of Jordan furnished a sufficient supply of water for so large an assembly. As soon, however, as the many waters of Enon, though not so abundant as those of Jordan, were sufficient for the diminishing crowds that attended his ministry (the people were now attending Christ's ministry, and being baptized by his disciples) he removed to Enon, because its spring water was purer than the turbid waters of Jordan. Quality, and not quantity, was the cause of his removal, which clearly indicates that the "much water there" was chosen because of its adaptation to culinary, rather than its necessity for baptismal purposes.

Well, but how about their going down into Jordan? Jordan is a variable stream; its swellings are proverbially great. It has banks within banks, so that for a large part of the year a large multitude of people might stand dry-shod in the bed of the river. Going "down into Jordan," or "baptized in Jordan," does not necessarily mean going down wholly under water, nor even into the water at all. If the people passed in procession by the Baptist, he himself standing where he could frequently dip his hyssop branch in the running stream, and if he sprinkled them as they passed, historical accuracy would be preserved if the historian should say they were all baptized in Jordan. This construction, of course, presupposes that the baptism was by sprinkling. If it were antecedently proved that baptism equals immersion, then it must be admitted the form of the expression would correspond, and the history must be so interpreted. But conceiving as we do that it was impossible for John to immerse the multitude he is said to have baptized, the above construction is, to say the least, not only possible, but also plausible. The form of the expression, taken by itself alone, appears to give the case to the Baptists, but all the facts taken into account make it necessary to give another construction to the record. The whole question in a nutshell is, Do the words, "they were all baptized in Jordan," prove immersion so conclusively that all antagonizing considerations must give place? or may these words be

satisfactorily explained otherwise? We deem the above an answer.

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Every mere tyro in Greek knows that the word "*apo*," here translated "out of," ought to be "from;" and with this translation the passage proves nothing in favor of immersion. "Having been baptized, Jesus went straightway from the water," is a literal translation of the passage, and therefore nothing more need be said in this connection about it.

2. The Pentecostal Baptisms. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." There are here four distinct things, each of which, both here and in other Scriptures referring to what is here recorded, is called a baptism. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." This is a fulfillment of what Christ had said to them a few days previously, after his resurrection and before his ascension, "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire." This is a fulfillment of John's prophecy, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost *and with fire*;" or that prophecy was never fulfilled, so far as we know. These two evidently have special and direct reference to miraculous gifts; for it is said in immediate connection, "And they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." Then there is the baptism with water, which Peter exhorted the people everyone of them to receive. This was the initiatory rite which Christ commissioned his disciples to administer to all disciples unto the end of the world. Lastly, Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

This refers, beyond doubt, to the saving influence of the Spirit, which is vouchsafed unto all believers throughout the world unto the end of time. These are each of them called a baptism. The one, the reception of the gift

of the Holy Ghost, is that in which all believers are more especially interested, and it is that which is signified by the baptism with water. Now, this baptism with the Holy Ghost, whether it refer to the bestowment of miraculous gifts or to the saving, regenerating influence exerted in the minds of men, is here and elsewhere spoken of as a somewhat "poured out," "shed forth," "sprinkled upon;" but never as a somewhat in which the people are immersed. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will *pour out* of my Spirit upon all flesh; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will *pour out* in those days of my Spirit.

Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath *shed forth* this which ye now see and hear." All these forms of speech, "pour out," "shed forth," "sprinkle upon," are, of course, figurative illustrations. The Holy Ghost is a person, and he enlightens, persuades, and sanctifies men by a direct exertion of personal powers and influences; and, so far as we know, the manner of his operations has no analogy in anything material. But the Holy One has chosen water baptism as a sign or representative of the Spirit's work, and has frequently spoken of the Spirit as poured out, shed forth, sprinkled upon, and never as a somewhat to be immersed in; so that, so far forth as the relation of the signified and the signifier has any bearing upon the mode ! of the latter, the argument is wholly against immersion. Other passages of Scripture, in which the Spirit's baptism is spoken of, will be briefly referred to further on.

The remark, that at the pentecostal baptism the people were immersed in the Spirit, put forth, because it is said all the house in which they were sitting was filled, is a manifestly desperate resort. It would be unworthy of respect, even if the record had said that the house was filled with the Spirit; but it does not so say. The house was filled "with a sound as of a rushing, mighty wind"—it was the people who were "filled with the Spirit." In respect to the pentecostal baptism with water nothing more than has been already said in these pages bears upon the question of mode. Since in regeneration that which is signified in baptism, the Spirit, is said to be poured out upon us, it seems appropriate that in water baptism that which is the sign of regeneration, the water, should be poured upon the persons baptized—all analogy or resemblance in this

case is adverse to the idea of immersion. What was said about the impossibility of John's baptizing by immersion the multitudes he did baptize is applicable here. It is not possible for twelve men to baptize three thousand persons, one by one, immersing them wholly under water in the time the record allows for the administration of the ordinance. Fix a reasonable time for the assembling of the hundred and thirty, allow some time for their sitting together of one accord in that one place, then compute the time necessary for the circulation of the report through the city concerning the marvelous events which had occurred, add the time necessary for the assembling of the thousands, for the arrangements necessary to bring the audience within the hearing of Peter's voice, for the sermon preached, for the inquiries of the convicted, for Peter's instructions to them, and for their separation from the multitude, and then see if it is conceivable that, on that same day, after all these occurrences, the administrators and the candidates could make the necessary preparations for a proper administration of baptism by immersion, and then resort to some place where there was sufficient water and other conveniences necessary for the baptism of such a multitude, and, I say, see if it is conceivable that then and there, at that late hour of the day, twelve men could immerse three thousand persons.

Again, what evidence is there that there was any place in Jerusalem where so many people could be immersed? Do you say the pools? What is the probability, supposing that they were adequate, that the authorities would have allowed them to be used for such a purpose? Why does not the record contain some intimation of so important apart of the movement? How many went to Siloam and how many to Bethesda? By what arrangement was the company divided? If one pool was sufficient, which was it? Did all go to Bethesda?

Is it not strange that so prominent an event, so sublime a scene, a part of the transaction so essential, according to the doctrine of the exclusive immersionists, to the validity of the ordinance, a mention of which would have settled this question for all time; is it not strange that there is a total absence of even the remotest allusion to any thing of the kind? Is it said that possibly the baptism took place on some subsequent day? we reply, that the record says the same day there were added about three thousand souls; of course were added to the Church, and that by the initiatory rite—

no other idea is admissible. And, again, it is said the Lord added daily such as should be saved; so that soon after it is said that the number of the men was about five thousand; beyond doubt the converts of each day were discipled on the day of their conversion.

3. The Baptism of the Eunuch.—"And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." The point at issue in respect to this passage is, as to the meaning of the terms "went down into the water" and "come up out of the water." Plainly, neither of these terms describes the act of baptism or any part of it, for the baptism took place after both had "gone down into the water," and before they "came up out of the water." And, again, both went down and both came up, so that if these expressions describe baptism, Philip must have baptized himself as well as the eunuch. This is so evident that probably no one would claim that the expressions themselves prove anything as to the mode of baptism; but it is claimed that they imply immersion, since they teach that both went farther than would be needful for sprinkling or pouring. No Greek scholar would rely upon this: for the word *eis*, translated "into," when used as it is used in this passage, properly and generally signifies "to"—simply direction toward a place; and the word *ek*, translated "out of," should be translated "from," as direction from a place is its proper meaning. Where entrance into is signified, the particle *eis* is prefixed to the verb, and repeated after it as a preposition; where simply direction towards is the idea, the word is used alone as a preposition, precisely as it is used in the passage under discussion. John xx, 1-8, illustrates and proves this rule. When the disciples went to the sepulcher and did not go in, the word *eis* is used precisely as it is here used, when it is said Philip and the eunuch went down to the water; and when it is said that they went into the sepulcher, the other form of speech, *eiselthen eis*, is employed; the particle is prefixed to the verb and is repeated after it. The term *ek* in the antithesis of *eis* corresponds with this difference; thus, when *eis* means "to," *ek* means "from;" when *eis* is repeated, and the idea of "into" is expressed, *ek* means "out of."

The passage then simply affirms that both Philip and the eunuch went down out of the chariot to the water, and Philip baptized the eunuch; and

when they were come from the water, and were about to take seats in the chariot, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. There is no immersion here, neither in the forms of expression in the text, nor in the circumstances of the case; contrariwise, the probabilities are against a chance finding in that desert of a quantity of water sufficient for immersion; and also against the supposition that the parties had any change of apparel or other preparation for such an exercise.

#### 4. Miscellaneous References to Baptism— Buried in Baptism.—*Romans vi:*

"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death." Colossians ii: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God."

These two passages are parallel; they speak of the same thing. What that thing is, is obvious from the passages themselves and from their contexts. In Romans the topic of discourse is the doctrine of justification by faith. The passage quoted is a part of Paul's reply to the objection that this doctrine, by offering forgiveness on easy terms, is an encouragement to

*"continue in sin;"* and the reply in substance is that Christians in baptism renounce sin, become dead to it, and enter covenant obligations to keep all God's holy commandments. Those who are baptized into Christ—that is, Christians—are dead to sin and alive unto God. In Colossians Christians are declared to be complete in Christ, in whom they are circumcised without hands, which consists in putting off the body of sins, becoming dead to sin; that is, regenerated—which regeneration is represented by baptism. Now, it is obvious that the idea of a burial is figurative, for there is no literal burial in the case. Is it said that the burial of Christ is literal, and that that is the thing represented by baptism? We reply, There is no such thing in the text.

The thing represented is a spiritual circumcision, a putting off of the body of sins. Again, Christ's body never was so buried as to be represented by immersion; again, baptism never represents Christ's death—the Supper

does that: and again, the planting of the next verse, and the crucifixion of the verse following, must be just as literal as the burial of the passage in discussion. The obvious fact is, that all are figures. Is there any argument for immersion in the rhetoric of the text? Let us see. The real thing said is in substance, They that are Christians have, by what baptism represents, as effectually separated themselves from sin as a dead and buried body is separated from the affairs of this world; shall such a one "continue in sin?"

Surely, there is no immersion in that. The mistake by which this passage is made to support immersion consists in making baptism represent Christ's death.

This is evidently erroneous, and of course the inference from it is so also.

*Baptism of Suffering.*—"But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? With the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized." In this passage the words in question are used figuratively to represent the persecutions and martyrdoms that Christ and his apostles would be called to endure. The idea expressed by the figure is the idea of being overwhelmed. So that the figure looks towards immersion in the sense of a large quantity of water; but it fails to apply fully, because afflictions are waters into which we do not go willingly and plunge ourselves, but are waters which come upon us. And very great afflictions overwhelm us. The likeness is nearer to a drowning than to a modern immersion. Exclusive immersionists are welcome to all the argument there is in this figure.

*Baptism unto Moses in the Cloud.* "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." If the apostle here affirms that the passage through the sea was a literal baptism, then our opponents must give us this text for infant baptism.

Beyond doubt all the members of all the families of Israel were alike under the cloud and in the sea. If the passage through the sea were a literal baptism it was not immersion, for they were dry-shod; if the

baptism were from the cloud then the text favors sprinkling or pouring, since the water, if it was water, came down upon the people from above them. They were not plunged into the cloud. But, soberly, we see no literal baptism here at all. The word baptized is used for the thing it represents, the consecration of one's self to a religion. The Israelites, all of them, when in the sea and under the cloud, that cloud which was their shade by day and their light at night, baptized themselves (the original has this sense) unto Moses; that is, became disciples of that form of religion which Moses taught.

*Divers Washings.*—Hebrews ix, 10: "Only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances." The word here translated "washings" is in the original "baptisms." It refers to the water ablutions of the Jewish religion. They are here said to be diverse (*diaphorois*), differing from each other. These water ablutions, of course, differed as the subjects to which they applied differ. Cups were not cleansed as the books, the altar, the people were. For the purifying of lepers it was required that they wash their clothes and themselves, besides the sprinkling with the hyssop by the priest; but this was not done at the temple, but at their homes. The purifying of the people in the temple was by sprinkling: their cleansing at home was of the whole person, and might have been by immersion. So that, if this passage teaches anything as to the mode of baptism or purifying, it authorizes the use of such modes as are best adapted to the objects or persons purified, and to the circumstances of the purification. And this is common sense. The mode is nothing essential. Anything that by convention is understood to represent purification is the thing wanted. That secured, all else is circumstantial, not essential.

*The Washing of Cups and Pots, Brazen Vessels, and of Tables.*—"The Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the traditions of the elders: and when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." In the original the first word in this passage, translated "wash," is *nipsontai*; the second is *baptisontai*. The word translated "washing" is in the original *baptismous*. This proves conclusively that the word *baptizo* and all its derivatives are generic terms, of precisely the same import as the word wash and its derivatives.

The mode of the washing is not indicated by the term itself. This fact of itself is decisive of the whole controversy as to the mode. But more than this is deducible from this passage. The word translated "tables" is *klinon*; this means the couches on which the Jews reclined at their meals. That these were not washed by immersion is evident from the nature of the case. The cups were doubtless immersed, as that is the most convenient method of washing them. So, again, we have here both modes of baptism.

Again, it is said that when the Jews returned from the market they eat not except they baptize themselves. It is not supposable that they fasted every time they returned home from business until after they had had an opportunity to take a bath. And again, the complaint of the Pharisees here against Christ's disciples was not that they had not bathed their whole person, but that they had not washed their hands. The water-pots spoken of at the wedding in Cana will explain the method of these personal purifications.

*The Baptism at the House of Cornelius.*—“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. Then Peter answered, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. And as I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning; then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Here, as in many other places, water baptism is paralleled with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the latter is said to fall upon, to be poured out upon, the people. The argument here is in favor of effusion.

*The Vesture Dipped in Blood.*—Rev. xix, 13: “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God.” Here the word translated “dipped” is “*bebammenon*,” perfect passive participle from *bapto*. If, as is quite certain, there is an allusion to Isaiah, where he that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah says, “Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment,” then the passage teaches the same as above that *bapto* is generic. And as a warrior never immerses his garments in the blood of his

enemies, but in the conflict is frequently besprinkled therewith, the use of the term *bapto* in this passage favors sprinkling.

*The Promise of the Spirit, and its Fulfillment.*—“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring. It is time to seek the Lord till he come and rain righteousness upon you. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; and from all your filthiness and your idols will I cleanse you. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. The washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ.” In these and many other passages of Holy Writ the renewing of the soul in regeneration by the Holy Ghost is figuratively represented by the use of water—always sprinkled or poured or shed upon the people, never by the people immersed in water.

#### POST-APOSTOLIC PRACTICE.

It is conceded that immersion was sometimes practiced in Christian Churches in very early times. To account for this satisfactorily, on the supposition that it was never practiced during the apostolic age, is of course impossible; for if the records of history furnished reliable and conclusive testimony as to the origin of the practice there could be no controversy or difference of opinion respecting it. The absence, however, of any note of an innovation on this subject has not the same bearing as such an absence in the case of infant baptism; for a change in mode, it being conceded that it was non-essential, is a very different thing from the admission to the ordinance itself of a whole class of persons previously excluded. Again, let it be remembered that admitting that something very like immersion, or even the thing itself, was sometimes practiced in apostolic times, is not the same as admitting that it was the only mode of baptism, and therefore essential to the validity of the ordinance. If this be admitted, then of course the difficulty in accounting for the fact of immersion in the early Christian Church disappears, and

the difficulty in the case assumes another form.

It is contrary to all *a priori* probabilities that the practice of the same persons in such an ordinance as baptism should be different in any prominent particular at different times; yet greater improbabilities than this are sometimes actual facts. There is at least no absurdity in the supposition that something very like to immersion was in some way connected with the baptismal service in apostolic times, and that at the same time the service itself in its essential particular was something else —was not immersion, but sprinkling or pouring, or either. But again, this difficulty of accounting for the existence of immersion in the Church on the supposition that it is not essential to baptism may be retorted. On the supposition that it is essential, how is the origin of sprinkling and the belief in its validity to be accounted for? Here is a balance of difficulties, and perhaps it were well to leave it, but not quite yet. Once again: in very early times baptism was trinal; the candidate was naked during the service, and wore white garments till the Sabbath following; the priest caused him to taste salt, anointed him with oil, and gave him milk and honey, and exorcism and abjuration was used to drive evil spirits both from the water and also from the candidates. If such things could be early introduced into the practice of the Church without any record of opposition to the innovation, perhaps even immersion might have been. Again, it is to be remembered that for hundreds of years of Christian history immersion has been the practice of but a small minority of the Christian Church.

We have endeavored to condense this discussion within as narrow limits as seemed suitable in view of the interest which the subject has actually awakened in the Church, and think we have done so. And yet we have at least a slight conviction that an apology is due for the amount of attention given to it. For to our own thought, unless it can be clearly shown that immersion is divinely commanded, it is evident that the mode is not an essential element in the ordinance.

We conclude that water applied in the name of the Trinity by a proper administrator to a proper candidate, with a proper purpose and intent on the part of all parties concerned, is Christian baptism.

We also conclude that the mode may be determined by the Church in convention as circumstances may seem to require, or, as things are now in these our times, by each individual for himself. "Let every adult person and the parents of every child to be baptized have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring. It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the Church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the Word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and woundeth the ccnsciences of weak brethren. Every particular Church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification." (Methodist Discipline.)

# CHAPTER 17: THE LORD'S-SUPPER.

“AND as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.” (Matt. xxvi, 25-30.)

“And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.” (Mark xiv, 22-26.)

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” (Luke xxii, 19, 20.)

“I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said; Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup,

ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor. xi, 23-29.)

"The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves, one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ. Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain word of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith. The sacrament of the Lord's-supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped. The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's-supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike. The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual, and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit."

(Methodist Discipline, Articles of Religion.)

The Scriptures above quoted show that the Lord's-supper is a divine institution, appointed to be perpetuated, observed, and repeated in the Church until the end of time. This is evident upon the surface of the passages themselves. The purpose and intent thereof require its repetition. The circumstances attending its institution, especially the obvious intent that it should be substituted for the passover, a Jewish

institution annually observed, plainly show the same thing. That it was a divine requirement, a command of the Master, is evident from the fact that the apostles so understood it, and accordingly adopted it immediately as a part of divine service. It is said of the disciples, after the day of Pentecost, that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers." It is quite probable that a communion service was at first observed at every meeting. The declaration of Paul that he had received of the Lord his instructions respecting the Supper, seems most conclusively to indicate the divine authority for this sacrament. Some commentators think it possible that Paul received his knowledge of the history of the Supper, not by an immediate revelation, but through those who were present, on that memorable night; but to our thought had that been so, he would not have said, "I received of the Lord"—an expression which cannot be well interpreted to mean anything less than an immediate revelation.

## 17.1. THE NATURE OF THE SUPPER.

1. The Lord's-supper is a *commemoration*. It is more than a mere memorial service; but it is that. "Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; this do in *remembrance of me*. This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in *remembrance of me*." Specially in the service of the Supper the communicant is to call to mind the sufferings and death of our crucified Lord and Savior, and those sufferings and that death are to be thought of and dwelt upon as an exhibition and demonstration of the great love wherewith he has loved us.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that, a man lay down his life for his friends." In the Supper, then, Christ is specially thought of as man's friend, as our elder brother, who in our behalf and for our salvation hath taken upon him our nature and submitted himself to the death of the cross.

This love, so commemorated, is not the mere passionate fondness of an indiscreet friend; it is the love of one infinitely wise and all-powerful: a

love that had all possible resources at command, and all wisdom needful for the selection of the most efficient and effectual means. It is not only true, that in saving us he died; but it is also true, that he died to save us; it is not only true; that there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved; but it is also true, that no other name could be given by which we might be saved. What an occasion for an impressive memento! If love prompts the remembrance of friends, and fondly cherishes the mementos of a valued friendship, with what affectionate delight must the lovers of Jesus commemorate such love as his!

2. The Lord's-supper is a *monument*. This service not only perpetuates the memory of Christ's death in the minds of his friends, but it also proclaims that death, and perpetuates the evidence of its actuality throughout the world, to all men, until the end of time. The existence of the Christian Church, with its visible rites and ceremonies, is a demonstration to the successive generations of men that the record with which these services are associated, upon which they are founded, is a record of actual facts in history. These services exist; they had a beginning; they are inseparably connected with the history of their origin and import; that history is *such*, that unless true, it could never become the foundation of such a Church, and the commencement of such rites and ceremonies. The Lord's-supper could never have been erected as a monument to the memory of Christ's death unless Christ had lived and died, as is recorded. The Supper, then, is the keystone of apologetics, a constantly recurring evidence and demonstration of the authenticity of the Gospel history.

Behold here the wisdom of the Master as evinced in the selection of such a monument. Marbles crumble to dust; the everlasting hills are made low; all material things are perishable; but an act done, a service performed, has in itself no element of destruction. The disciples of our Lord in that last memorable night ate bread and drank wine; their successors through the centuries since, until the present, have imitated their example; and those that come after us, who love our Lord Jesus Christ, unto the latest born of the race, will repeat this solemn service, a commemoration of the Savior's love, and a monument to his life and death.

3. The Supper is a *profession of faith*. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." The service, as a commemoration and monument, shows the Lord's death. What we have now in view is the implied thought; namely, that the communicants have each a personal faith in the truth of the doctrines which are thus shown forth. In all orthodox Churches, whenever one intelligently joins in the communion he thereby professes to believe in Christ's death as a necessary vicarious propitiation and satisfaction for the sins of the world. Plainly, therefore, unless one have such a faith he can not consistently join in such a service.

In Unitarian Churches the service is professedly merely memorial; it is an acknowledgment of obligation to Christ, and a grateful remembrance of his love; but it is not a profession of faith in the propitiatory character of his death. If, therefore, these two classes of professed Christians join in the holy communion it must be by an understood compromise, in which only a generic faith is professed and all specific faith is ignored. To our thought that service is no Lord's-supper which does not show the death of Christ as indispensably necessary to the life of man; that does not show the shedding of blood as a *sine qua non* to the remission of sin.

4. The Supper is a *sacrament*. The word sacrament, as signifying that which is both a sign and a seal, has a theological use of peculiar significance. In this sense baptism and the Lord's-supper are sacraments, but confirmation, marriage, orders, penance, and extreme unction are not. The idea of a seal involves the idea of a covenant, and that involves the idea of obligations assumed by the parties. And here another sense of the word sacrament is applicable. The promise, or obligation assumed may be solemnly affirmed; the contract may be confirmed and strengthened by the solemnities of an oath. The sacrament of the Supper may be regarded as a promise, a renewal of the baptismal covenant, to renounce the world and live in obedience to all God's holy commandments. This renewal of the covenant is made under the solemn sanctions of an oath. He who receives the holy communion thereby promises under solemn circumstances to endeavor, by God's help, to live a holy Christian life.

5. The Supper is a *communion*. To be "in love and charity with our

neighbors," in the sense of the ritual, does not require that we believe that all our neighbors are Christians, nor even that all who appear at the communion are such; it is rather a judgment of our own Christian character than a judgment of the Christian character of our neighbors. The import of the invitation is, Ye that are conscious to yourselves of good will and charitable sentiments towards others, and intend to lead a new life, draw near. But yet the nature of the case implies a faith and confidence in the general purity of the Church, a preference for and a pleasure in the society of the Church, a sympathy in its joys and sorrows, and especially a holy delight in its assemblies and devotional services. At the Supper, more than elsewhere, the Church sits together as in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus.

The goodly fellowship of the saints is here specially manifest, and is peculiarly precious.

6. The Supper is an *act of obedience*. "Do this in remembrance of me," is a positive command; as much so as, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart." The rational ground of this is not as manifest as is that of the other; but the authority whence they both proceed is the same, and filial love and confidence is more manifest by an implicit obedience to this than to the other. Whoever reverently, piously, with good intent, receives the broken bread and poured out wine in commemoration of his Savior's love, as manifest in his death, obeys a divine command; and whoever refuses to join in this holy service when a suitable opportunity is afforded, especially if he refuse out of any opposition to the service itself, refuses to obey the Lord that bought him. To neglect the Lord's-supper is not a trifling matter; nor is an attendance in a careless, thoughtless manner much, if any, less censurable than a total neglect.

7. The Supper is a *eucharist*. It is an offering of grateful praise, a tribute of thanks to God for his unspeakable gift; for the love wherewith he has loved us, manifest in the gift of his only begotten son; and for all the blessings and benefits of our being; all of which are at the table recognized as coming down from the Father of lights through the mediation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Without that death we had not been. How naturally, then, when that death is commemorated, does

gratitude for all we have and all we are arise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

8. The Supper is a *means of grace*. "I am the bread of life. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you: whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." It is not certain that in these words our Lord had any reference to the Supper which he would afterwards institute. But whether he did or not, the Supper symbolizes that of which he here speaks. In the language of our Articles of Faith, quoted above, "to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ." Always remembering, as expressed in the further language of the article, that "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner, and the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith." The symbol and the figure aside, the literal truth taught is: First, that Christ's death is that event by which spiritual life in man became possible; and, second, that faith in that death is that by which spiritual life in man becomes actual; so that "he that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not hath not life." This giving of his flesh for the life of the world—that is, his death; the eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood—that is, the appropriation of the merits of his death by faith; and the having eternal life—that is, remission of our sins, the regeneration of our nature, and the title to eternal life, are symbolized in the sacrament of the Supper. Whenever, therefore, the Supper is valid and efficacious, the communicant receives saving grace. The principle of spiritual and eternal life, the soul's real life, moral and religious qualities and excellencies of character, if already in the recipient of the sacrament, are quickened, broadened, extended, elevated, perfected; if not in him this life in its beginnings is imparted. In a heavenly, spiritual manner the partakers of the Lord's-supper by faith do so eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood as that, as our Lord himself saith, They dwell in him and he in them.

Probably, to unbelieving bystanders there is no service of the Christian religion so meaningless and useless as the eating of bread and drinking wine after the manner practiced in the Churches; but to the penitent believer there is no other service in which he so consciously comes near to Christ; no service in which his spiritual strength is so perceptibly increased; in which his religious joys are so greatly multiplied; and in which his hopes are so strongly confirmed.

9. The Supper is a *sign*. A sign, in the sense here intended, is that by which a thought is expressed or a doctrine declared. The sense is the same as when we say words are signs of ideas. There are a few sounds and motions which naturally express states of mind, but most words derive their meaning from an agreement among those who use them; they have no natural adaptation to express the ideas they represent. By the appointment or ordinance of God, as well as by agreement among men, anything may be made the sign, representative, symbol, or exponent of any other thing, or idea, or doctrine.

Our affirmation is that God has ordained water baptism as indicating, expressing, representing the Spirit's work in the regeneration of the souls of men. Baptism is the sign of regeneration. In like manner God has ordained the Lord's-supper as a representation of Christ's work in the redemption of men by his death upon the cross. The Supper is the sign of atonement. Of course it symbolizes all that is inseparably connected with the doctrine of salvation by and through the death of God's incarnate Son. So that it may be said to be the sign or symbol of the Christian system of religion. Eminently it expresses, declares, represents, the doctrines of sin, both original and actual, of pardon by propitiation, of our Lord's divinity, of his incarnation, of the Holy Spirit's agency in the application of atonement, and the necessity of faith as the indispensable condition of salvation and eternal life.

10. The Supper is a *seal*. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is an announcement of good news, a proclamation of an amnesty from the King Eternal to his rebellious subjects upon earth, in which, on condition of repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, God promises to forgive our past sins, cleanse our hearts from all unrighteousness adopt us as his children, and make us heirs of eternal life. This Gospel is called a

covenant or contract between God and man, and the sacraments are said to be the seals set to that contract by which its conditions are confirmed and the fulfillment of its promises assured. The idea of a covenant accords with Bible representation, the idea of a seal is not repugnant to the Word, and perhaps it was divinely designed that the sacraments should be considered as seals to the covenant.

Theologians insist upon it, and no reason is obvious why anyone should object.

Hence, we say the Supper is a seal. At every observance of this sacred rite, yea, at every thought of it, we are most impressively reminded and assured of God's good will towards us, of his great love wherewith he has loved us, of his long suffering and tender mercy, and of his readiness, since he spared not his own Son, with him freely to give us all things. By this seal, our faith that his promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, is signally strengthened.

God condescended to confirm his promise to Abraham by an oath; because with men an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife, and being also willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel he confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. If God confirms his promises with an oath, so that man may be assured by his promises and his oath, then surely there is no presumption in regarding his divinely appointed ordinances as seals set to confirm his covenants.

## **17.2. THE EFFICACY OF THE LORD'S-SUPPER.**

The reader is referred to what is said above respecting the efficacy of the *sacraments*. The Roman doctrine of transubstantiation is affirmed solely on the authority of the Roman Church. Under a claim to infallibility that Church has affirmed that our Savior's words, "This is my body," are to be

interpreted in the most literal sense possible, so that the communicant in the Supper does literally eat the flesh and drink the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accordingly the doctrine of the efficacy of the Supper is that the eaten flesh and drank blood imparts to the recipient the principle of eternal life. That such a doctrine cannot be refuted with arguments, or at least that one holding such a doctrine cannot be convinced of his error by arguments is manifest, since the doctrine itself is wholly outside the realm of reason. It is entirely a superstition; not only without warrant in reason, but also without any support in adequate authority. Superstitions are removed not by processes of reasoning, but, if at all, by so directing attention to the truth as to call thought away from the superstition. If the victim becomes convinced of what is true, he finds that his superstition has departed, he knows not how or when—it has been displaced by that which is better. But if anyone inquires what may be said antagonistic to the doctrine of transubstantiation, we reply, all the case requires or admits of is an appeal to common sense. Must the words, "this is my body," be interpreted literally? do they not, in the light of an honest judgment, admit of a different interpretation? Evidently the common intelligence of mankind will pronounce at once that the words in question mean simply, this represents my body; and since the bread and wine, after consecration, retain all the sensible qualities of bread and wine, the same as before, common perception affirms that they are bread and wine, and nothing else. The real presence is a fiction of the imagination—it is abhorrent to reason. When the Lord broke the bread and said, This is my body, he did not hold himself in his own hand; and when the priest consecrates the wafer, that wafer does not become the same that was nailed to the cross and entombed in the sepulcher.

The doctrine of consubstantiation owes its existence in the world purely to the antecedent existence of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and is a resort to avoid antagonizing the prejudice prevailing in the public mind in favor of the Roman doctrine of the "real presence." It avoids some of the monstrous absurdities of Romanism, but as a doctrine of the efficacy of the Supper, it is equally at fault with its more absurd predecessor—it makes the Supper efficacious because of the real presence. The substance of Christ's body is *with* the bread and wine, and therefore partaking of the bread and wine imparts to the recipient the divine-human Christ, and is

in him a source of spiritual life. That the literal eating or drinking of any material substance can by any possibility "*ex opere operato*" impart moral qualities to the soul of the eater is pronounced nonsense. That the eating and drinking can by appointment and ordination be made, on any condition to be performed by the eater—that is, can be made "*ex opere operantis*"—to impart moral qualities, is not less superstitious than the doctrine of an inhering efficiency itself.

Eating and drinking cannot be in any way the source or cause of moral excellence. It may by appointment be made the occasion, the instrument, the condition on which divine agency may be exerted to produce moral and religious results; but it is in itself wholly, naturally, and necessarily inadequate, unadapted to be the moral cause of anything. The efficacy of the Supper is derived wholly from the agency of the Holy Spirit. The service itself has no more adaptation to produce the results contemplated in its institution than any other service would have had that might have been selected and employed for the same purpose. Eating and drinking are no more adapted to the work of saving the soul from sin than clay moistened with spittle is adapted to give sight to one born blind.

The Supper is a means of grace. A proper observance of the ordinance is instrumental in securing the supernatural advantages of religion. It may be that the Supper has a grace peculiar to itself; that is to say, possibly some religious influence may be exerted upon the mind, some spiritual advantage or profit may be secured, through the proper use of this sacrament, that could not be obtained in any way. It is, however, quite probable that if the blessing received through this means of grace differ from that or those received through other means, such as prayer, preaching, and reading the Scriptures, it differs rather in degree than kind. The Scriptures do not warrant the idea of any peculiar distinct grace that may be articulately stated and defined as resulting from the Lord's-supper, but they do not intimate that the Supper has no peculiar grace. The design of the ordinance, the circumstances attending our Lord and his disciples at the time it was instituted, and, indeed, all that pertains to it, naturally invest the service with an impressive solemnity, and with an interest more tender and affecting than any other. The Church in all its history has regarded this as its most solemn and most impressive service. Hence, it is not unreasonable to expect a blessing at the table not found

elsewhere.

If we cannot definitely designate any peculiar grace, this is no bar to the fact that the Supper confers in some sense a special blessing. It must be remembered that what is here said of the Spirit's agency when he employs the Supper as his instrument must be said of his agency at all times.

Consciousness does not distinctly draw a line between the natural and the supernatural. We can not by any process of introspection within our power distinguish states of mind which are due to supernatural causes from those that arise by natural and ordinary processes. The laws of thought, feeling, and volition are divinely appointed, and the Spirit does not violate his own laws. His operations are ever in accordance therewith. There is, then, nothing anti-scriptural or unphilosophic in supposing that the Supper is attended with a blessing peculiar to itself, perhaps differing only in degree, not in kind, from other spiritual blessings, yet differing. And this supposition may be reasonably indulged, though we are not able distinctly to define in what that peculiar blessing consists.

It is the office of the Spirit to enlighten quicken, strengthen, guide, sanctify, and comfort. The two great thoughts of religion are sin and salvation. The Supper is eminently a recognition of these two all-absorbing ideas. When man, therefore, approaches the table, thereby confessing his sins and his sinfulness, it is reasonable and Scriptural to expect the Spirit to enlighten the eyes of his understanding to see as he could not see without divine aid the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Man's apprehension of his need of a Savior and of salvation may be expected to be more vivid at such a time than at any other time or under any other circumstances. And especially when man commemorates the death of Christ, thereby professing his faith in Christ's death as his only ground of hope that his sins may be forgiven and he himself be saved, it is both reasonable and Scriptural to expect that then the Spirit will take of the things of Christ and show them unto him, so that he will see, as he could not see without such aid, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; it may be expected that he then and there will be enabled to lay hold upon the hope set before him in the Gospel with a faith more intelligent, firmer, stronger, more persistent, and more consciously

saving than in the use of any other means of grace. In like manner, if we consider the Supper as a sacrament, an occasion of renewing our covenant with God, of reconsecration of self to duty, how reasonable that feeble man should be divinely strengthened to make the firm resolve! or if the Supper be regarded as a eucharist, how reasonable that the Spirit who helps man's infirmities should inspire grateful praise, and make man's thanksgiving an acceptable offering unto the King of kings and Lord of lords! or if the Supper be a communion, a season of the goodly fellowship of the saints, may it not be expected that He to whom the Church is as the apple of an eye, will intensify, elevate, purify, and bless that service which, more than any other, is exponential of the love Christians bear one towards another. In a word, the Lord's-supper is made efficacious through the Spirit for all the purposes of salvation and eternal life.

## **17.3. THE VALIDITY OF THE SUPPER.**

The blessing, breaking, giving, and eating of bread; the blessing, pouring, giving, and drinking of wine, constituted the principal facts connected with the service when instituted; and, so far as outward acts are concerned, these are generally considered all that is essential. It is deemed an unimportant circumstance that the bread was unleavened; the Lord used what was before him—any other would have served as well if it had been present.

The wine, some think, was unfermented. Whether it was or was not so then, certainly it is expedient that it should be so now; and since fermentation is not essential, Churches do well to exclude it from the sacred Supper. The disciples received the sacrament reclining on couches, after the manner of the Jews at their feasts. The service occurred at night; probably not at an early hour in the evening. After the Supper they sang a hymn and then went out into the mount of Olives. All these things are mere circumstances; it is not required that any of them should be repeated. As to these outward elements and acts, good judgment would seem to dictate that the officers of the Church should, so far as possible, provide such elements and make such arrangements for the

administration as would be likely to attract the least attention. To use at the sacrament, in the name of wine, what is not so much like wine as mere sweetened water, especially if it be a mixture offensive to the taste, is as likely to distract thought, and tends as much to subvert the purpose of the ordinance as would the use of an alcoholic wine. Let that be used which the people are accustomed to recognize as bread and wine; let the bread be in shape to be conveniently broken, let the wine be provided in a larger vessel, to be poured out into the cup; let the people sit, stand, or kneel as they are accustomed to do, and let the Supper be at such time of the day, and with such frequency of occurrence as, in the judgment of the particular Church where the service is to occur, shall be most convenient and profitable to the people.

The ordinance is valid when, or its validity consists in the fact that, it is such that God will own and bless it; such that the Holy Spirit will render it efficacious to accomplish the purpose for which the ordinance was instituted, and for which the people, when rightly disposed in mind, observe it. The above-named circumstances are not essential to this purpose, and, of course, not essential to the validity of the ordinance, any farther than they stand related to the purpose and intent of the participants. If in giving attention to these things the participants do intend, according to their best information and ability, to do the thing which the Master commanded, when he said, "Do this in remembrance of me," their intent, honestly and piously entertained, will render the service valid, whatever, in a given case, they may do. Of course, it is patent, that in such a case bread will be eaten and wine will be drank; but incidental circumstances may vary as occasion may require.

*The Administrator.*—The ancient claim of the Roman Church, and more modern claim of the English Church, that any so-called Lord's-supper is not a valid sacrament, unless it be administered by a minister ordained by the imposition of episcopal hands, and unless the so-called episcopal authority be derived from episcopal ordination in a regular succession from St. Peter, will be considered in the following chapter, under the head of Church Polity.

We make no objection to the doctrine that any particular Church is fully authorized to determine the orders in its ministry, and to appoint and

ordain its ministers in its own way, according to its own judgment of what the letter and spirit of the Gospel and the exigencies of the Church may require. We only object when a given Church assumes that its chosen methods, orders of ministers, and modes of administration are essential to validity, so that all others are not valid, and are but senseless services, which God can not bless and render efficacious. Of course, every particular Church does, in its organization, determine the number, titles, character, and duties of its officers. The officers of a Church being designated, and their duties defined, it becomes the duty of the individual members of said Church to be obedient to and to esteem very highly in love for their works' sake, those that are over them in the Lord, and admonish them. It would be wrong for the laity to interfere with the duties assigned to the ministry, because such a course of conduct would disturb the order and harmony of the Church. It is reasonably expected that schisms, dissensions, and disputations in respect even to these minor matters of modes and forms would so grieve the Holy Spirit of God that he would depart from a Church so rent and so disturbed. Wherever, then, there is a consecrated ministry, duly appointed, authorized, and ordained to administer the sacraments in the Church, it is expected that such ministry, and not the laity, will administer the ordinances. And yet, should a company of believers be so situated that the services of a minister, regularly ordained, could not be secured, such a company might select one of their own number and appoint him to bless, break, and distribute bread, and to bless and give to others the cup; and they doing this with a pure and pious intent to obey our Lord's dying command, as we see it, there is no authority in the Word of God for affirming that the Holy Spirit would not bless that service as a holy sacramental offering made unto God.

*The Communicants.*—The doctrine of "close communion," so-called, as held and practiced by some Baptist Churches, is founded on two assumptions: First, that baptism is an essential prerequisite to the sacrament of the Supper; and, second, that without immersion there is no baptism. The second of these affirmations we have already discussed. The first is only an inference from what may be called the natural order of things. If a man be rightly disposed to receive the Lord's-supper, the opinions and sentiments which thus dispose him would also induce him

at the first opportunity, if he were not already so, to become a member of the Church. As baptism is the initiatory rite, of course, in the natural order of events, the rite of baptism, as a fact in history would occur in each individual case before the sacrament of the Supper. But to say that, in the natural order of events baptism is administered before the Supper is received, is quite a different thing from saying that baptism is an essential prerequisite to the Supper; that it is so essential, that the sacrament of the Supper would not be valid if administered to an unbaptized person. We affirm that if, in all other respects, a person were qualified to receive the Supper of the Lord, the fact that he had not been baptized, supposing, of course, that it was no fault of his that he had not been, ought not to debar him from the privilege. As a matter of order if possible, the administrator in such a case should defer the Supper a sufficient time, then baptize the candidate, and after that administer to him the Supper of the Lord. We say again, he should do this as a matter of Church order, but not as a matter of Scripture requirement. Is it alleged that the apostles preached baptism as the first duty of converts? We assent and reaffirm that they did so because, in the nature of the case, that is the first duty in the order of time; not because baptism qualifies the convert for the Supper in any such sense, as that without it he could not be qualified.

The apostolic practice is simply in accordance with natural order, and is not, therefore, to be quoted as a divinely given directory. If close communionists insist upon straining matters to their extremes, we in return might make an argument by the same process, and insist that Christian baptism was not instituted till the commission was given to preach the Gospel, disciple all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Holy Trinity; and if so, then no proof is extant that the apostles themselves, who administered the Supper, and ordained others, giving them authority to administer it, ever received Christian baptism.

A credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of men is the sole condition of admission to membership in the Christian Church, which admission is by the initiatory rite of baptism, and entitles the disciple to all the privileges of the Church—admission to the table of the Lord included. The table is the Lord's table, and not the exclusive property of any particular Church. All persons who, in a

judgment of charity, are members by faith of Christ's spiritual body, the universal Church, are entitled by their relation to the great Head of the Church, to commemorate his death in communion and fellowship with other members of the same mystical body. None but such as are notoriously anti-christian can be rightfully excluded. The responsibility of eating and drinking unworthily must rest with the communicant himself —the administrator cannot judge, he knows not the hearts of his fellow-men. If the life of the applicant for admission to the table be not immoral, if he profess penitence, a purpose of righteousness, a desire to be saved from sin, and faith in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only ground of human hopes for salvation and eternal life, then the administrator cannot lawfully exclude him.

The invitation in the ritual of our Church appropriately describes the essential prerequisites and qualifications for admission to the sacrament of the Lord's-supper: "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and devoutly kneeling make your humble confession to Almighty God."

# CHAPTER 18: CHURCH POLITY.

THE topics properly belonging to the subject of Church Polity might be treated scientifically by discussing the rights and duties of ministers and the rights and duties of laymen; and when the rights and duties of ministers were exhaustively and articulately stated and defended, the rights and duties of laymen would be obvious without articulate statement. We do not propose to follow this line of thought precisely, but shall devote the following pages chiefly to a discussion of the Christian ministry: as to the source of its authority; the nature of a call to the performance of its duties; its functions; the qualifications prerequisite in those who enter into its service; and the orders or offices into which it may be divided.

This discussion of the Christian ministry in general will be followed by a statement and defense of the Polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

## THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

The reader is referred to Chapter First of this Seventh Book, in which, under the head of "The Church," we have said what we deemed necessary to say by way of defining the term, and in defending the affirmation that the institution, as so defined, exists by a divine appointment.

It is the will of God that men organize themselves into societies for their mutual edification in piety; and to this end that they preserve a perpetual use of the means of grace; namely, the preaching of the Word of God, the administration of the sacraments, and all other things necessary for the purposes of such organizations. An organization for executive purposes, for the accomplishment of defined ends, for the performance of certain acts, by its nature involves the idea of the appointment of designated persons, whose duty it shall be to do what is required to be done. Executive efficiency always requires the location of responsibility. If the Gospel is to be preached, someone must be appointed whose special duty it shall be to preach it. So also of the administration of the sacraments,

and of whatever else it may be the will of God that the Church should do. In a word, organization for executive purpose involves the appointment of officers. If, therefore, the existence of the Church be by divine authority its officers are divinely commissioned.

*The Christian ministry is a divine institution.* That it is the will of God that individual persons be appointed to perform the duties contemplated in the organization of the Church, and that they for this purpose separate themselves from the ordinary avocations of secular life and devote themselves exclusively to religious services, is evident from all that is said in the Scriptures either directly or indirectly upon the subject. Under the patriarchal dispensation it is manifest that the father of the family was the religious teacher of his household. He offered the sacrifices, made supplications, and offered thanksgivings. This priesthood, being the first in the history of the race, is spoken of as of marked distinction. Even Abraham, and Levi, then in Abraham's loins, as St. Paul says, offered tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God; and Christ himself was a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Under the Mosaic dispensation the separation of Aaron and Levi for the service of the temple is most distinctly required by a divine commandment. To transcribe all the Scriptures in which Moses is instructed by direct revelation from God respecting the Aaronic and Levitical priesthoods would be to rewrite a very large portion of the books of the Mosaic law. A few passages must suffice: "Take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office. And he that is the high-priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head nor rend his clothes; neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the Lord. And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death. And Aaron was separated that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons forever, to burn incense before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name forever. Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him; thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his

sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel. And I, behold I, have taken your brethren, the Levites, from among the children of Israel; to you they are given as a gift from the Lord, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation."

The prophets were divinely called. That they claimed a divine commission is evident from their frequent use of the phrase, "thus saith the Lord." "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people, he suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

These quotations suffice to show, what is either expressed or implied in all the Scriptures, that in the dispensations of religion preparing for and introducing the Christian dispensation a ministry existed by divine appointment. If this were not asserted in direct terms, it were sufficiently evident that it is so, since from the nature of the case it must be so. A religion in the world without a ministry is an unknown thing. All religions have their priests, teachers, ministers; by whatever name they are called, they are persons appointed to do what their religion requires to be done.

We come now directly to our proposition; namely, the Christian ministry is a divine institution.

The apostles were divinely called. "And it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day he called unto him his disciples; and of them he chose twelve, whom also he called apostles. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils. Ye have not chosen me; but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, for he was numbered with us and had obtained part of this ministry; for it is written in the book of the Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let

no man dwell therein; and his bishopric let another take.

Wherefore of these men, which have companied with us all the time that our Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness of his resurrection. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest; but rise, stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity."

The call of the seventy: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. Go your ways; behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."

The call of others to the ministerial office by apostolic authority:

"And when they had ordained them elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. For this cause

left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee. And the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed they laid their hands upon them. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

The above passages require no comment to make it plain that they prove the point in hand; namely, the Christian ministry is a divine institution. We pass, then, at once to a second thought involved in this; namely, *The Christian ministry is a vocation, not a profession.*

When we say the ministry is a divine institution we mean not only that it is the will of God that a ministry should exist, but also that it is his will that particular persons, designated by himself, should occupy said ministry. In other words, God calls those whom he hath chosen for this purpose to separate themselves from the ordinary avocations of secular life, and devote themselves exclusively to the work he assigns them in his Church; and this call is individual and personal. It is not a general call addressed to persons of certain qualifications, and so left to their own option as that they will be equally well-pleasing to God whether they accept or refuse; but it is a call to Peter, James, and John, as individual persons, and is of the nature of a divine requirement, which they must obey or come into condemnation before God. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Though I preach the Gospel I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel; for if I do this thing willingly I have a reward, but if against my will a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me."

This idea of a divine call to the Gospel ministry might seem to be nothing more than a natural inference from the divine omniscience. God knows what avocation is best for each individual of all the race; and being of infinite good will, it might be naturally inferred that he not only has a place for each one of all the human family, but also that it is his will that

each one should occupy that place which he sees is best for him. Moreover, this view would not annihilate all distinctions between secular and sacred callings, though it would very essentially modify what is a very common opinion. Most men seem to think that obedience to God's will in respect to a call to the ministry is more imperative than obedience in other particulars; that ministers are consecrated men in a sense in which other men are not consecrated; that selfishness and self-seeking are totally inexcusable in ministers, but to some extent are allowable in men engaged in secular pursuits. Now, the truth is, all men are equally obligated to do whatever they do with an eye single to the glory of God; that is, to make duty their governing motive. All men are equally permitted to acknowledge the Lord in all their ways. Whether a man be an agriculturalist, a mechanic, a merchant, a minister, or a missionary, he is bound to be a religious man in all his pursuits; to carry his purpose of righteousness and obedience to his sense of duty with him perpetually, and never to deviate therefrom.

In what, then, does a call to the Gospel ministry differ from any other calling? Perhaps we may say, first, it is more specific and definite. A man endowed with a mechanical genius may find a wide range for the employment of his talent, and it may be a matter of indifference whether he build warehouses or steamships; and so of all other secular callings. Whereas, the range of a minister's vocation is more restricted, and the heavenly vision points him to this or that particular thing, and says do this and nothing else. But again, very essentially the ministerial vocation differs from the ordinary avocations of life in the extent of its responsibilities. It is man's highest calling, it is an honor, than which Providence bestows upon mankind none that is greater; it more immediately involves results of the highest importance; the salvation of men is instrumentally connected with it; the prosperity of the Church and the welfare of the commonwealth depend more upon the ministry than upon any other class of citizens; hence each individual minister must be held to a higher responsibility than any other one person, other things being equal. Again, corresponding to this great responsibility there must be, in sensitive minds, a distinctness and an intensity, in their sense of duty, which, being more clearly cognized in consciousness than the same sense in respect to any other duty, comes to be considered a call, special

and unique in itself, and specially divine. In this view it doubtless is so, and yet it is not anomalous; it is perfectly analogous to God's method of dealing with men in his requirements of them in other respects. Its specialty consists in its sacredness, and not at all because it is, in any sense, unnatural or unreasonable. Of course, the call to the ministry is supernatural; but it is so in the same sense that regeneration and assurance are supernatural; it is from an operation of the Holy Spirit upon the mind of its subject.

## OBJECTIONS.

The religious society called Friends are generally understood to deny that the ministry, as regarded by all other Christian Churches, is a divinely appointed institution of the Church. Their most distinguishing characteristic is to ignore, as far as possible, all externals in religion. Baptism is by the Spirit: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost"—water baptism is excluded.

The Supper is that spoken of in the Scripture, which says: "I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in and sup with him and he with me." The inner light, the "light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world," is their guide, and silent devotion is more common than vocal. The eminent respectability of the sect as such, and the amiable and excellent character of its members, give their opinions a just title to a respectful consideration, and yet, as we see it, it is obvious, from a surface view, that the effort to ignore externals is mostly a failure, and by necessity must be; and that so far forth as it is successful, it is a detriment. So far as the Friends have an existence in the world, that existence is due to the externals which they admit and practice. They have their meeting-houses, their solemn assemblies, their high seats occupied by their ministers, their monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings for business, their common and statute laws for the administration of discipline—in a word, all the essentials of an organization; hence they exist, but their effort to exclude externals is so far successful that efficiency is excluded, and they barely exist. The genial influence of their good character, and their adherence to their opinions respecting oaths, slavery, and war, have given them an influence in the

world; but for aggressive advancement upon the powers of darkness, for attack upon the opposing forces of the world, for anything like executive efficiency in advancing the civilizations of mankind, they are well-nigh totally inoperative. Again, it is objected to the common doctrine of a divinely instituted ministry that it was not designed to be perpetual.

It is said that in the infancy of mankind the patriarchal priesthood, in the youth of the race the Aaronic and Levitical ministry, and in the inauguration of Christianity, the apostleship and the presbytery, were needful, and were therefore instituted; but in the advanced manhood of Christian civilization no such ministries are required, and hence they ought to be dismissed. It is further alleged that it is prophesied, that in the last days the priesthood is to become universal, so that old men shall dream dreams, young men shall see visions, and both sons and daughters shall prophesy. We reply to this last argument: First. When the old dispensation ceased, the new one commenced; the "last days" began at Pentecost. The prophecy respecting a universal priesthood was inceptively fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, for, said Peter, *This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.* It was fulfilled contemporaneously with the inauguration of the Christian ministry—both the universal priesthood and the apostleship, with the presbytery, subsisted at the same time. To the alleged affirmation that the Christian ministry is not needed, we reply: If the time is ever to come when all the people shall be so taught of God as to need no teachers, that time is not yet. It is not true even of the most advanced Christian community now on earth, that the mass of the people have such a knowledge of God and of his will as revealed in his Word, that they have no need of the offices of the Christian ministry. That time never can come, for children are born into the world as ignorant as were their parents at their birth. Knowledge is not inherited; the successive generations are to acquire knowledge by personal effort under instruction in the same way that it was acquired by their ancestors. Again, the amount of religious knowledge actually existing in any community is always overestimated. People do not know as much of those things that make for their peace as their neighbors suppose, nor do they know as much as they themselves think they do; and none are more ignorant of the true state of the case as to themselves and others, than those who

affirm that the people have no need of pulpit ministrations.

But as to the perpetuity of the Gospel ministry the teachings of the Scriptures are decisive. The great commission to go into all the world and disciple all nations, is accompanied with the declaration that the divine presence should attend his ministers unto the end of the world—which is equivalent to an affirmation that the ministry itself should continue till the time of the consummation of all things. Agreeably to this is all that is elsewhere said in the Scriptures on the subject. Ministers are spoken of as stewards of a household whose Master is absent. In the absence of the Master they are to give to the servants each his portion of meat in due season; they are to watch for the return of the Master as one that must render an account; their stewardship is to continue till the Master's return—that return is at the end of the world. Again, the present dispensation is the last dispensation of mercy and probation in the history of the race—these are the "last days;" no change of ministry or of the ministration is anticipated by anything recorded in [the] Word of God—all we are authorized to expect is a largely increased success, a triumphant victory in the now existing contest, and the universal prevalence of the kingdom of God; but no new dispensation, no marked change in agencies or instrumentalities. The visions of Swedenborg and the revelations of Joseph Smith are not fulfillments of New Testament prophecies—there is no Scripture warrant for any expectations of any thing of the kind. The kingdom of heaven is an everlasting kingdom; it shall not be given to another nation; the stone cut from the mountain without hands shall itself become a great mountain; it shall dash in pieces all opposing kingdoms, it shall fill the whole earth and shall stand forever.

Another objection to the doctrine of a divinely appointed ministry is that it tends towards, and inevitably results in, an oppressive hierarchy; that it always results in a dominating priesthood, and a minified, enslaved, and oppressed people. This objection claims that the apprehension of a divine mission to certain functions involves the idea of an exclusive divine right; that is to say, whoever thinks he is, by divine command, required to perform certain acts conceives that he has an exclusive right to do those things; so that, if any one interferes to do the same things, or to dictate to him how he shall do them, such a one violates divinely given right. It is

alleged in support of this objection that the facts of history show the truthfulness of the allegation. It is claimed that the doctrine of the divine right of kings has always resulted in civil oppression, and that in the same way and for the same reason the doctrine of the divine rights of the priesthood has always resulted in ecclesiastical tyranny.

In reply, it is pertinent to remark that it is noticeably common that those whose declamations are most vociferous in denunciation of civil and ecclesiastical oppressions do themselves, in the total absence of self-consistency, allow and even contend for a divine right to something. In the state they denounce a monarchy; in the Church, a hierarchy; but in both state and Church they claim a divine right for a democracy. There is and ought to be, and it is the divine will there should be, such a thing as a government in the world. In the Church and in the state power must be located somewhere, even though it is liable to be abused. Executive efficiency requires the concentration of power and the location of responsibility; the former for utility, and the latter as a check and a restraint against abuse. These things all whose opinions deserve consideration will admit; and the objection to a divinely authorized ministry now before us is not consistently made by persons entertaining these opinions. The question as to what form of Church government furnishes at once the greatest efficiency and the most effectual defense against the abuse of power is another question, which we shall discuss further on. As to persons who object to a ministry that it is liable to become a dominating power, lording it over God's heritage, and object with a view to an annihilation of the ministry in every form—that is to say, as to arrant levelers, pronounced anarchists—we have only to say that the time devoted to them, if wisely used, will be employed in conducting them to asylums for the insane.

*In what does a call to the Christian ministry consist?* or by what evidences may an individual person know that he is divinely called to the work of the Gospel ministry?

First, there must be in the subject himself a *clear conviction of duty*.

We here leave out of account all the processes by which he has come to that conviction, all the evidences on which his judgment in the case is

founded, and mean simply to say that before he makes a commencement in the work itself he must be well satisfied in his own mind that it is his *duty* to take upon himself this holy office. The genesis and growth of this conviction will be different in different minds. In some an impression to this effect has its beginning in early childhood, and is never displaced; but, rather, grows with growth and is strengthened with strength. Many a young man, in the days of his youthful pride and worldly ambition, has refused to become a Christian because of a resistless conviction that if he attempt to live a conscientious life he would be obliged to devote himself to the Christian ministry. Some, never resisting such an impression, but cherishing it, have grown up into all the habits, associations, and convictions that belong to the vocation, and without any special revelation, or anything but what might be expected to arise naturally in a mind so disposed, they have rightly judged themselves divinely called; and, not disobedient to this heavenly manifestation, have been useful ministers of the New Testament during life. That such impressions should be made on the minds of children is nothing strange or unnatural, nor are such cases extreme and infrequent. God, who knows the end from the beginning, and has in his own mind a place in his providential designs for each one of all his children, would do nothing unlike himself, or unusual in his ways, if he should thus prepare his ministers for their high calling and their life-time work. St. Paul says God separated him from his mother's womb, and Samuel was called by an audible voice when but a child. If these be called extreme cases we should call the opposite extreme the case of those who by a sudden and unexpected revelation are called to the work. St. Paul, though separated from his mother's womb, and enabled to live in all good conscience, nevertheless through ignorance had come to kick against the pricks, to make war against the truth, and to oppose the purposes of God. To him the Master appeared in a light above the sun at noonday, with an audible voice revealed to him his will, and commissioned him as a minister and an apostle. But evidently such revelations are not to be expected as of frequent occurrence. St. Paul's mission was peculiar, and required peculiar qualifications. The life he was called to live, and the work he was called to do, are not possible to anyone who has not positive knowledge that the cause he serves is the cause of God, of truth, and humanity. We do not intend here to say that the usual call to the ministry is not of the nature of a revelation; for we maintain

that it is so in all cases, even where it appears least so. It is an impression upon the mind of its subject by the Holy Spirit that it is his duty to preach the Gospel. And this is a revelation from God.

The circumstances and manner of the genesis and growth of the impression are incidental, not at all essential; but what we intend in saying that such revelations as that made to St. Paul are not to be expected as of frequent occurrence is that sensible manifestations, miraculous or even marvelous phenomena, are not to be expected. Those cases where in a spiritual way an overwhelming conviction or impression comes as thunder from a clear sky, sudden, unexpected, yet clear, powerful, resistless, are not of frequent occurrence, so that no one can reasonably infer from the absence of such manifestation that he is not called of God to preach the Gospel.

As a fact in history, probably most ministers come to their conviction of duty in respect to the ministry very much in the same way as any godly man comes to such a conviction in respect to any other duty; and, as I suppose, this method is more desirable and more reliable than any other.

An intelligent and pious man, contemplating any important enterprise, will take the matter in prayer to God; the frequency, fervency, and persistency of his prayers will be as the magnitude of the interest involved.

Having consciously a paramount desire that God so direct his mind in the investigation as to bring him to such a conclusion as God sees will be for the best, he confidently trusts that he will be so guided. He trusts in God to this effect whether or not in the investigation consciousness cognizes distinctly a supernatural influence operating upon his mind; his faith in divine promises assures him that, having asked, he will receive all needed aid. Thus praying and thus trusting, he uses his natural powers of mind in discussion and decision, just as he would do if he knew that supernatural aid could not be granted him. He uses all available opportunities for obtaining information: he makes comparisons, forms judgments, deduces inferences, and comes to conclusions by the natural, ordinary processes of thought; and when his mind is made up that it is his duty to do thus and thus, this conviction is to him identical with the conviction that it is

God's will that he should do thus and thus. If the question under discussion were whether he should locate his family in this neighborhood or in an adjoining one, there would not be the same degree of interest as if the question were whether he make his permanent home where he is or remove to a distant land; and so in all the concerns of life that come up for discussion and decision. No earthly interest can be of greater importance to a young man than that which is involved in the question whether or not he devote his life to the duties of the Christian ministry. Of course, then, if he be intelligent and pious there will be an intensity of feeling, a depth of interest in the investigation of this question, that is not legitimate in any other investigation; but, though in this respect peculiar, the process need not be, ought not to be, in any sense abnormal. But it is said cases frequently occur of persons who in their own judgment have neither qualification for nor adaptation to such a work, but have an irresistible impression that it is their duty to preach. They know not whence the impression came, or how it continues. It is to them without foundation in reason; it is wholly unaccountable; and yet of itself it overbalances all antagonizing forces. If this be so, then is the case abnormal, and admits of no reasoning processes. To the man himself his sense of duty must be his rule of life; he must follow it wherever it lead him. If the judgment of the Church accords with his judgment and affirms an entire want of qualifications, of course the Church will withhold their approbation, and the man must do as he can. A conviction of duty, then, founded on an apprehension of personal qualifications, adaptations, tastes, inclinations, desires, opinions, sentiments, providential indications, and the known judgments of others competent to form a reliable opinion—a conviction thus founded and formed and perpetuated prayerfully, piously, constitutes one element of what may be considered a divine call to the Christian ministry.

But the wisest and best of men are liable to form incorrect opinions even in matters of religion and duty, and that, too, notwithstanding the promised and assured guidance of the Spirit of truth; hence the necessity of a second element to render the call valid and reliable.

Again, if it be a given man's duty to preach, it is the duty of the people to hear him, to support him, and to cooperate with him; hence the Church has rights and duties that must be taken into account.

The second element in a valid call to the Christian ministry is the approbation and authority of the Church. If the regularly constituted authorities of the Church where the candidate resides, being personally acquainted with his gifts, graces, and usefulness, are very generally (it would be better still if the judgment were unanimous) of the opinion that it is clearly the candidate's duty to engage in the work of a Gospel minister, and do signify their judgment by a properly attested certificate; this judgment, thus recorded and attested, being accordant with the candidate's own intelligently and piously formed convictions, then is the call complete and adequate, and may be reasonably considered a divine call.

#### THE DUTIES OF MINISTERS, OR FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE.

It is not our purpose here to construct a catalogue of ministerial duties, but rather to discuss the difficult and delicate question of ministerial prerogatives. However, in passing, it will not be improper to remark, that it is the chief, the paramount duty of a minister to preach the Gospel of the Son of God. This includes the idea of teaching, instructing, reproofing, admonishing, entreating, persuading, to the extent that the people be made to know, to feel, and to acknowledge all that pertains to a life of godliness. To this end we place first in importance a full statement and clear defense of the doctrines of the book of God. This includes the obligation "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word." The knowledge of God is the life of the soul; the people perish for the lack of knowledge. "To know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent is eternal life." Piety and morality are not the products of ignorance; ignorance is not the mother of devotion. The minister is, therefore, to "go and teach;" he is to disciple his hearers to Christ; and from the nature of the case it is obvious that the only effectual method of Gospel teaching is that which thoroughly indoctrinates the people in Gospel truths. These are the foundations of all duties and experiences; if the foundations be removed or are wanting, what will the people do?

Next to doctrines come duties. Practical godliness must be insisted upon as of first importance, not only here and there a little, but also much every-where—"line upon line, precept upon precept," distinctly stated,

vigorously defended. Whether the people hear or forbear, it is the minister's duty to lift up his voice as a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions, and make known unto them their sins; to show the beauties of holiness and persuade the people to the practice of virtue.

Experience will measurably take care of itself. However, to point out what experiences of holy love, joy, and peace, what satisfaction in consciousness may be expected from a belief of the truth and the discharge of duty, is always serviceable as an incentive to the right, and therefore may be profitably employed as persuasives to piety. So also, on the other hand, the hard ways of the transgressor, the terrible consequences of sin, are powerful motives, when properly apprehended, to deter men from vice and crime. Knowing the terrors of the law will induce the minister to persuade men; and men may be persuaded by a presentation of what prompted the persuasion. To preach Christ, then, is to preach all that pertains to sin and salvation; but all is incidental to the great work of showing the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world—all must point to Christ or be reflected from him. Christ is *alpha* and *omega*, the beginning and the end of Gospel ministrations. The minister's only business here below is to cry, Behold, behold the Lamb.

**“Happy if with his latest breath  
He may but gasp his name;  
Preach him to all, and cry in death,  
Behold! behold! the Lamb !”**

The administration of discipline is a function of the ministerial office. The honor of God and of his Church must be defended. Purity in character and uprightness in life must be maintained in the ministry and membership of the Church, both on account of their inherent value, and of their necessity as a testimony to an unbelieving world to the excellence and divinity of religion. That the responsibility of administering discipline rests in part upon the laity is conceded by all. The limitations of prerogatives, the question as to what functions of discipline belong to the ministry and what to the laity will be referred to hereafter. The thought here is, that to some extent ministers are appointed to administer

discipline, and are held responsible by the great Head of the Church for the faithful discharge of this duty.

Pastoral duties need not be specially referred to in this connection; they are not, however, passed over as being of less importance than preaching and discipline, but as having less connection with the special topic now before us; namely, the difficult and delicate question of prerogatives.

To what extent does the office of the ministry involve the idea of exclusive rights or official prerogatives? We first direct attention to the general application of the doctrine of rights to the office of the minister.

The idea of a divine vocation is no other than an idea that God calls and requires certain persons to do certain things. Now this is evidently, in its nature, exclusive. The call itself confers authority; and, therefore, whoever interferes violates a right. The minister is called to qualify himself to do for the good of others what they can not do for themselves; and it is the possession of such qualifications that constitutes him a minister; without them he is not, and can not be, a minister unto the people. This ability and disposition to do for the good of others what they cannot do for themselves is the foundation of rights in all cases, and is no less applicable to religious teachers than it is to civil governments and to parental authorities. Is it said that the people employ their ministers to do for them what they desire to be done, and that, therefore, the minister has no rights but such as the people confer? We take direct issue on such an affirmation.

The people do indeed, in a sense, employ their ministers and pay them wages; and have, therefore, certain rights which the ministry may violate; but the people's redress and remedy in case their rights are violated, and the method by which such violations are to be prevented, is not found in an unlimited dictation to the ministry, but in the removal of the incumbent when convicted of such a crime. Ministers are not mere tools for the people's use; they are men commissioned by divine authority to preach the Gospel of the Son of God, and to administer discipline in the Church of God as required by the Holy Scriptures; and they are required, on their responsibility to the great Head of the Church to preach the Gospel as they understand it; and to administer discipline as they

understand the Scriptures require.

Agents are of several kinds. Common laborers are agents employed to do the will of their employers both as to ends and means. What they are to do and how they are to do it is determined by the will of their employers; and they are to obey orders regardless of consequences. Physicians are agents employed to secure an end, but are employed because they are supposed to know better than their employers do by what means the end desired may be secured.

Ministers, so far forth as they are the employees of their people, are agents of the same class as physicians. They are to do a work which their people cannot do. It is their ability to do this that constitutes them ministers. The pulpit is not a mere stage, where the performer's only purpose is the pleasure of the people. Ecclesiastical courts are not mere conventions, nor is the pastor in the Church court a mere chairman. The Church is invested with divine authorities and prerogatives, and some of them belong to ministers by virtue of their office.

An agent held to responsibility cannot be required to do that for which he is responsible according to the will of another; he must be sole arbiter in all questions of personal duty. An executive, even, must execute the laws as he understands them.

Secondly, we direct attention to the application of this doctrine of rights to specific duties. In what sense is the right of a minister exclusive in the matter of preaching the Gospel?

Suppose a minister appointed to a given Church. The manner of his appointment need not be considered in this connection. He is there, we will say, by the authority of the Church, which authority, in the case of all established Churches, is founded, in part at least, upon the consent of the laity. It is only requisite for the present illustration that it be supposed that the laity, recognizing the man as a minister called of God, as was Aaron, have received him as such, and that now he has the right of a Gospel minister to the pulpit of said Church. In what sense is that right exclusive? Very plainly, in the sense that no man can at his own will, and against the will of the pastor, eject the pastor from his pulpit and occupy the same himself; nor can the pastor, during the time of his stipulated

pastorship, be forcibly ejected by any authority except on impeachment after lawful processes of discipline. But evidently this is not saying that no one else except the pastor shall ever on any occasion occupy the pulpit of a given Church. With the pastor's consent anyone may do so, and not only any minister, but any layman, male or female. The pastor being held strictly responsible, he may at his option employ any talent in his aid which he judges will be for the glory of God and the good of the people. The doctrine of exclusive rights does not shut the mouths of all who have not been regularly ordained. An intelligent minister is ever ready to say, Would God that all his people did prophesy! and he will allow the Word free course, that it may be glorified.

As the pulpit belongs for the time to the pastor, to be occupied by himself in person or by those whom he shall appoint, so is it his at such times as he shall select for public ministration. It is his to select such topics, and to discourse upon them with such frequency and at such lengths, as in his judgment is best adapted to promote the spiritual welfare of his people. If he be wise he will consult and advise with the intelligent and godly of his laymen, and he will ever cherish a profound respect for their judgment and will heed their counsels; but in all these matters he is to himself sole and ultimate authority. So that any private or concerted action tending to thwart the pastor in the execution of his godly purposes is schismatic, is a violation of rights, is carrying strange fire to the altar of God's house, is reaching forth an unconsecrated hand to steady the ark of God.

Again: let us inquire to what extent and in what sense the doctrine of ministerial prerogatives applies to the administration of discipline? This question cannot be articulately answered without well-nigh an exhaustive treatise on ecclesiastical jurisprudence. We shall attempt only a charcoal sketch; but shall endeavor to give to it such distinctness of outline as will indicate what the filling up should be.

Government is naturally divided into three departments, legislative, judiciary, and executive. It is frequently said that Christ, the head of the Church, claims for himself all legislative authority, and that all that is of the nature of law in ecclesiastical government is already enacted, and is fully recorded in the writings of the New Testament. This is doubtless true so far as the end to be secured is concerned— *what* the Church is to

do is distinctly stated in the Word of God. It is also true in the sense that whatever the Church devises must be in accordance with what is revealed. But that the question of means, the question how to do it, is fully answered in the Scriptures no one will claim. The varied and ever-varying circumstances of human society require different methods at different times; so that at all times the question, What is best adapted to secure the end sought? is a question for discussion, deliberation, and decision. The Church, then, has conventional functions. Whether we call this legislation or designate it by some other term makes no difference with the facts. Practically, the Church must legislate in respect to many of its duties, its privileges, and its methods of operation.

Who shall have authority to legislate for the Church? Is legislation an exclusive prerogative of the ministry? or of the laity? or does it belong to the two united? If the latter, are the two to constitute one body, acting conjointly, or are they to deliberate separately, the joint action of the two separate bodies being required for the enactment of law? The Roman Church locates all legislative authority ultimately with the pope, to whom this authority belongs, as is alleged by that Church, because he is Christ's vicegerent. Congregationalism locates all governmental powers in the separate single congregation. Every separate Church is itself the source of all authority by which it is governed. The pastor is moderator, and the decisions of the assembled Church are final. All other theories of Church government range between these two extremes—between Romanism and Congregationalism; all agreeing in this one affirmation that lawful authority in the Church results from the concurrent consent of both the clergy and the laity. In the Methodist Episcopal Church the General Conference, composed of ministers and laymen, has "full powers," under specified limitations and restrictions, "to make rules and regulations for our Church."

Since in any given church the pastor is but one to the whole number of the membership, if he be only a moderator, and if the decision of a majority be final, without veto or appeal, it is obvious that Congregationalism, in theory, makes all government the exclusive right of the laity. That this is impracticable is obvious for several reasons. The matter determined has respect to something to be done. The executive agent is the pastor. In all cases of conflict between the opinions of the

pastor and of his people the pastor will be required to do what he judges ought not to be done; and of course, in case of a conscientious scruple, he will not do it. Again, though the pastor be in the assembly only a moderator, it is not possible that in any important matter his opinions should be unknown to his people; and by so much as he is a pastor in their esteem by so much is it certain that his opinions will determine their votes. It is replied to this that the pastor has influence with his people, and so has his own way, because he is a good and an intelligent man, and therefore has, as the wise and good always ought to have, a power over his people which is legitimate and lawful. We reply, This is true, and, moreover, is supposed to be actual in all cases. All ministers are supposed to be good men, and in matters of religion, in the affairs of the Church, to be wiser than their people. This is the basis of their call to the ministry; it is their qualification for it; it is the ground of all their rights as ministers. This effort of Congregationalists to apologize for ignoring the ministry in their theory of government is an effort, at one and the same time, both to recognize and deny a natural right. A minister is one called of God to separate himself from other avocations, and so devote himself to the affairs of the Church as to have a more perfect knowledge of them and a deeper interest in them than others, being occupied with other pursuits, have or can have. Now, to say that such a one has influence in determining Church enterprises, because he is an intelligent and pious man, and not at all because he is a minister, is, to say the least of it, a mere quibble. That the theory of Congregationalism is impracticable is obvious, not only from the fact that, in cases of conflict between the opinions of the ministry and laity, it requires the minister to do what he can not do conscientiously, and not only because the minister possesses a knowledge of, and an interest in, Church affairs, that will naturally and certainly give him a determining power in respect to them; but also because a single Church, operating separately, cannot discharge the functions for which the Church was organized. To preach the Gospel to every creature requires the combined action of the Churches.

Combinations for this purpose, and others involved in it, must be inaugurated and carried on by ministers chiefly, or they will not exist, or at best have but a feeble and inefficient existence. Laymen who are competent to share in works of this kind are men of talents which are

occupied with other affairs.

Idlers cannot do these things; men of executive efficiency are otherwise employed; ministers are called from other employments that they may attend to them—it belongs to their vocation, it is their duty to attend to them.

The theory of the Roman Church, which is the extreme of this question, opposite to Congregationalism, is too preposterous to require discussion. The most healthy and efficient action in the Church is the result of a harmonious co-operation of all its members, both clergy and laity. There are no conflicting interests, and when all things are rightly understood there will be no conflicts. The ministry especially have no interests that antagonize the interests of the laity—the ends to be secured are identical, and the methods of labor are of no interest except so far as they most efficiently secure the ends which all are supposed to seek. The co-operation of the laity is indispensable—they must therefore, be consulted, and their good will must be secured. How shall this be done? We take for granted, without discussion, that a pure democracy is impossible. Neither the whole Church nor so many of them as are required for necessary combination can be assembled in one place.

Representation is required by the nature of the case. We assume this without argument, the more readily because Congregationalists themselves have organized representative "associations, synods, and conventions." They say, to be sure, simply for advice and counsel, not for legislative purposes; but this, as we see it, is of no avail, for "associations" have some authority of some kind, to some extent; or, surely, not only is their action void, but they themselves are the equivalents of so many nonentities.

What ratio of representation, as to ministers and laymen, does the nature of the case or do the teachings of the New Testament require in the legislative assemblies of the Church? In the Acts of the Apostles several instances of Church action are recorded. The first is the appointment of Matthias to the apostleship in the place of Judas the traitor. After a speech by Peter addressed to the disciples, Joseph and Matthias were, the record says, appointed; and then, after prayer, they gave forth their lots,

and the lot fell on Matthias. The precise method here is not designated. Some say the appointment of the two was by a tie vote, and then the decision between the two was by lot; others that the selection of the two was a nomination, perhaps by the apostles, perhaps promiscuous, and the so-called giving of their lots was the formal vote of the Church. There is evidently nothing in this transaction that determines any question of Church polity beyond the general fact that both the apostles and disciples took part in the election of an apostle. The second instance of Church action recorded was the election of seven deacons. In this instance it is plainly stated that first the apostles called a meeting, showed the necessity of the appointment of men to the duties specified, and called upon the Church to nominate candidates. The Church did so, and then the apostles ordained the persons nominated. Of the office then instituted we shall speak hereafter in another connection, here we direct attention simply to the method of action; and we evidently find nothing additional to what was apparent in the other case; namely, some sort and degree of coaction between the apostles and disciples. The third instance is the case of the complaint against Peter for having preached unto the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius. When Peter returned to Jerusalem from his visit at the house of Cornelius, "they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest into men uncircumcised and didst eat with them."

Peter rehearsed the circumstances of his vision at Joppa, the invitation of the messengers from Cornelius, the command of the Spirit to go, the reception he and the six brethren who accompanied him received, his preaching, the baptism of the Holy Ghost which fell on all them that heard, and the admission of the Gentiles to the Church by baptism. And, it is recorded that "when they heard these things they held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Who the "they of the circumcision" were, whether apostles or disciples, or both, the record does not state. Nothing is learned here of any fixed forms of ecclesiastical jurisprudence—there was a complaint, a public vindication, and an acquittal, such as to form as the circumstances of the case seemed to require.

The next instance recorded is that of the action of the Church at Antioch for the relief of "the brethren who dwelt in Judea in the time of the dearth

throughout all the world which came to pass in the days of Claudius Csar." The disciples, every man according to his ability, contributed, and sent their contribution to the elders at Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. The disciples at Antioch made the contribution, Barnabas and Saul carried it, and the elders at Jerusalem received and distributed it—all as the exigencies of the times seemed to require, nothing in accordance with any prescribed rules. The next instance of Church action we notice is the appointment of Barnabas and Saul as missionaries. "There were at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, to whom, as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them; and when they had fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them away." After an extensive and successful missionary tour they returned "to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled; and when they had gathered the Church together they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."

In this case the call was by the Holy Ghost, the ordination by the prophets and teachers, the letters of recommendation probably by the prophets and teachers in behalf of the Church, and the report was made to the whole Church assembled together—there is nothing of preconcerted formality here. The next case we mention is that of the controversy at Antioch respecting circumcision, which was referred to the Church at Jerusalem for decision. Certain men came to Antioch from Judea, and taught the brethren that except they be circumcised after the manner of Moses they could not be saved. Paul and Barnabas had no small discussion and disputation with them. It was determined that Paul and Barnabas, with certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. They went, and being received by the Church, the apostles, and elders, they declared all things that God had done with them. At Jerusalem certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed still contended that it was needful to circumcise the Gentiles and to command them to keep the law of Moses. The apostles and elders came together to consider of this matter. Peter, Barnabas, and Paul each made an argument on the subject. James showed how Peter's testimony concerning God's visitation to the Gentiles was a fulfillment of the

prophetic Scriptures, and then gave his sentence, with which all were agreed. Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren, who were themselves also prophets. The decision of the apostles and elders was communicated in an epistle. The messengers came to Antioch, gathered the multitude together, and delivered the epistle; which, when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. This is the clearest case of Church legislation found in the record of apostolic times. It is worthy of note that the Church at Antioch did not decide the question for themselves, nor did they send to Jerusalem merely for advice—the decision of the Jerusalem Church was, with them, authoritative and final. Again, the deliberative assembly at Jerusalem was composed solely of apostles and elders. Peter, Barnabas, Paul, and James are the only ones mentioned as taking an active part in the discussion. James formulated the decision of the court. The letters were written and sent in the name of the apostles and elders and brethren.

The messengers chosen and sent from Jerusalem, Judas, surnamed Barnabas, and Silas, were chief men among the brethren, and also themselves prophets, who with many words exhorted and confirmed the brethren at Antioch. Silas did not return to Jerusalem, but became Paul's traveling companion—a fellow missionary with an apostle, a fellow prisoner at Philippi, who at midnight prayed and sang praises to God, and after the earthquake which released the prisoners he preached the Gospel of salvation to the convicted jailer and his household.

Now, in this clear case of Church legislation, stated with greater definiteness than any other, having respect to the most difficult and most troublesome question of the times, what do we learn as to the polity of the Church in apostolic times? Certainly nothing that indicates the existence of any fixed system, nothing that determines any authoritative limitation or definition of jurisdiction. What is done? how is it done? and who does it?

are questions that seem to be decided by the then present judgment of the Church, all concurring; which judgment results from a consideration and discussion of existing exigencies.

The last instance we mention is that of the Accusation against St. Paul, made at the time of his last visit to Jerusalem; namely, that he taught all the Jews which were among the Gentiles to forsake Moses. It is recorded that Paul, with several attendants, was gladly received by the brethren, and that on the day following this reception they went in unto James; and all the elders were present. Paul declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry; and when they heard it they glorified God, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law, and are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. Having rehearsed this accusation from the people, James and the elders directed Paul to purify himself according to the Jewish custom, and thus show publicly that he himself walked orderly and kept the law. Which thing Paul essayed to do, but was attacked by a riotous mob in the temple itself, was rescued by the chief captain, appealed to Caesar, and was sent a prisoner to Rome. We note nothing here but the fact that when James and the elders were themselves well pleased with Paul, and did glorify God on account of what God had done by his ministry, nevertheless out of regard to the popular opinion respecting him, they gave him apostolic directions—perhaps they were requirements for satisfying the public mind. The good will of the people, if possible by lawful means, must be maintained.

The purpose for which we have recited these instances of Church action has become apparent in the course of the recital. The appointment of the deacons seems to indicate that the election of Church officers belongs to the people and their ordination to the ministers; but the appointment of Barnabas and Saul as missionaries was by the Holy Ghost, and was divinely indicated directly to the prophets and teachers, who proceeded forthwith to ordain them.

The election of the deacons looks a little like Congregationalism; but the discussion and settlement of the question about circumcision looks wholly towards a hierarchy—and so of the rest. Plainly, no system of Church government is indicated in the New Testament, much less is one distinctly defined and divinely required. The Church is left to exercise its

godly judgment in adapting its operations and actions to the emergencies and exigencies of the times in which, its action is required.

Now, after what may seem to be a digression, we return to the question, What ratio of representation between the ministry and the laity do the teachings of the New Testament, or what ratio does the nature of the case require in the legislative assemblies of the Church? The above shows, we think conclusively, that the New Testament does not give sufficient data for a definite answer, and that this matter is left for the decisions of the Church.

What then does the nature of the case suggest as equitable and expedient?

Certainly not a *per capita* representation. It seems hardly necessary to say this, as no one would presume to claim it in so many words, though they might advocate principles which imply it; but it may serve as an illustration of the question, and lead to a more ready apprehension of what follows. Suppose, then, a Church in which the ratio of the ministry to the membership is one to five hundred, one pastor to five hundred members. A *per capita* representation in the governing assemblies of the Church would place the ministry in a very hopeless minority—a pure democracy is then out of the question. Shall the representation be equal, one layman for every minister? This, in the councils of a single local Church, would place all power and authority in the hands of two men, the pastor and one layman. This will not do, for in local Churches since the co-operation of each and all of the individual members is requisite for the highest prosperity, the laity must and ought to be fully represented.

Where the local interests of an individual Church are discussed, and where measures are adopted for the well-being of such a Church, the laity must be very largely in the majority; indeed, since, in most cases, there is officially but one minister to a Church, these primary assemblies are, and must be, the equivalents of assemblies composed wholly of laymen. In the higher courts of the Church, bodies having authority to act for and administer the government of many Churches, an equal representation might not be detrimental; but, in such a case, a comparatively small number, composed of either ministers or laymen, must constitute a

quorum, since ordinarily laymen, though appointed, would not in numbers equal to that of the ministry attend such meetings.

Our conclusion is, that in all the governing functions of the Church, whether legislative, judiciary, or executive, the ministry must be endowed with a balance of power. If by constitutional provisions the ministry be endowed with an absolutely dominating power that were an objectionable hierarchy; but a balance of power, hedged about with suitable checks and restraints, must be in the hands of the ministry, if the highest possibility of Church efficiency be attained. Even in the primary councils of the individual Church, if the pastor have not a personal influence with his people, which will secure to him the piloting power in stormy times, there is a weakness in the pastorate which is a certain bar to prosperity. He can not have a dominating power that will annihilate all opposing opinions, for the consent and co-operation of his Church is an indispensable prerequisite to success. But his personal influence, or the rules and regulations of the Church, better if both, must be such that the final decision is largely subject to his control. Of necessary and suitable checks and restraints, we may speak to better advantage when we come to discuss specific forms of government.

In the higher councils of the Church, where only the idea of representation is applicable, the ratio is different in different Churches, and in different bodies of the same Church. The presbyteries, synods, and assemblies of the Presbyterian Churches are composed of an equal number of ministers and ruling elders. The ruling elders are, however, elected to hold office during life, and might be reckoned as a subordinate branch of the ministry. In the Methodist Episcopal Church the quarterly and district conferences are composed mostly of laymen, the Annual Conference wholly of ministers, and the General Conference of ministers and laymen—the latter but a small minority. The practice of all Churches recognizing the lawfulness of representative bodies endowed with governing powers, gives to the clergy a balance of power; and we affirm, that in the nature of the case this of right ought so to be. Why not? what objection? Why, it is said this minifies the laity, gives the clergy opportunity to lord it over God's heritage—it is a hierarchy, a monarchy, a tyranny. Christian equality and a common brotherhood requires a pure democracy, and so on to the end of a long chapter. Now all this and all

other objections to a properly constituted supervision by the clergy of ecclesiastical affairs assume that the ministry and the membership have conflicting interests, when it is manifest that no such case exists except where one or the other, or both, become traitors to the cause they profess to serve. To provide against the possibility of treason by the annihilation of all power is to sacrifice well-nigh all the ends of life.

Executive efficiency requires the location of authority; protection against the abuse of power is not to be sought in its destruction, but in proper checks and restraints.

The interests of the minister and of his Church are the same. What is for the good of one is for the good of the other. The minister is divinely called to devote his entire resources to the well-being of his people, and is supposed to have a more perfect knowledge and a deeper interest in their best good than they have themselves. A true minister will never oppress the people he serves. The great Shepherd laid down his life for the sheep, and all his true followers in the pastorate have a portion of his spirit. That a balance of power be invested in the clergy, that a controlling influence be at their command, is involved in the nature of the vocation itself. They are to leave the ordinary avocations of life and devote themselves exclusively to the interests of the Church for this very purpose, that they may qualify themselves for, and devote themselves to, the direction of Church affairs.

We have allowed this discussion of the doctrine of ministerial prerogatives to take a somewhat extended range under the topic of ministerial functions, because it is as pertinent here as anywhere, and could not be entirely ignored. We, however, leave it at this point, and conclude the topic by a brief, and because brief, an imperfect specification of the duties belonging to the ministerial office. It belongs to the ministerial office to preach the Gospel, to organize Churches, to preside in all Church assemblies except such as are purely financial, to administer discipline by instituting and conducting all Church trials, and by executing the orders of all Church courts, to prepare, authorize, and ordain other ministers, to represent the Church in her deliberative assemblies, to legislate for the enactment of such rules and regulations as the good of the Church may require, and to perform all those offices of

oversight, kindness, and good will which naturally belong to the pastoral care of the flock.

### MINISTERIAL QUALIFICATIONS.

In what is said above in respect to the Christian ministry it has been asserted or assumed that the vocation is founded on certain qualifications possessed by the incumbent of the office or to be sought by the candidate for it. It is supposed that when God calls a man to the ministry he does so because he sees in him the requisite qualifications or an ability and disposition to acquire them; and the same is true of the Church. The doctrine of rights is founded upon the same basis. The right of the parent to govern the child is based upon the parent's ability and disposition to do for the child's good what he cannot do for himself. So, also, the minister has rights so far, and only so far, as he possesses qualifications for ministerial work.

Now, as religion touches every point of human life, as every congregation embraces well-nigh all descriptions of human character and condition, and as the minister's office is to elevate his people to a higher standard of culture and attainment than that they occupy, it has been preposterously inferred that the minister must possess all knowledge; that he must not only be a man of books, but also a man of affairs; that he must know the peculiar temperaments, habits, trials, temptations—in a word, the peculiar experiences of all his people, and thus be qualified to minister to each individual a portion suited precisely to his personal requirements. That this, if it were the will of the Lord, is to human apprehension greatly to be desired, no one will question; but to affirm that no man can be a valid Gospel minister unless he can measure up to such a standard is to affirm what is obviously unwarranted. There are diversities of gifts; no one man possesses all kinds of talents. Some are apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. There are different kinds of work to be done in the Church, and the diversity of talents in the laborers corresponds to the diversity of the work to be done. A man who is an apostle to one class of hearers is as one who speaks in an unknown tongue to another class.

As, on the one hand, some place the standard of qualification so high that

to realize it is impossible; so, on the other hand, some discount qualifications altogether, and affirm that success in the Gospel ministry depends solely upon divine inspiration. It is affirmed that whomsoever God calls he will qualify, and qualify by the immediate unction of the Spirit.

Scripture is quoted in support of this idea: "Paul planted, and Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." This and parallel passages are quoted in a sense that assumes that the planting and watering might as well have been done by wooden men, by machinery, as by apostolic ministration. Indeed, the idea assumes what is equivalent to the affirmation that idiots and insane people will do for ministers, because it is God who does the preaching. "It is not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord"—as though the might and the power were just as well absent as present. Since divine aid is essential, instrumentality is of no account. God and an idiot can do as much as any other two in the universe. But enough of this; such talk is evidently either the prattling of a child or the raving of a maniac. If men, who are men of sense in other matters, sometimes talk thus, as I am sorry to say they do, it is because they have in this thing become either dishonest or fanatical. "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. A bishop must be blameless, apt to teach, not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Holding fast the faith as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince gainsayers. Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. And the things that thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful men that they may be able to teach others also. Lay hands suddenly on no man. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight; not by constraint, but willingly; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being en samples to the flock. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise. These things write, I unto thee, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to

be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that can not be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." These passages, with a very large number of others with a similar import, both by what they say of the character of a Christian minister, and of the nature of the work to which he is called, indicate very clearly that a minister of the Gospel must be a man of eminent piety, knowledge, and culture; an ensample to the flock—a sort of model man, one whose conduct is worthy of imitation, and of a character such as may be aspired after. "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." And he employs his ministers as agents in carrying forward his designs. Ministers, then, are uplifting humanity towards a condition of perfection in all that pertains to a perfect humanity. How can they do this unless they themselves stand upon a more elevated plane than those do for whose elevation they labor?

Men influence the character of others more by what they are than by what they say or do. If, then, ministers seek a high culture in intelligence and spirituality for their people, how can they accomplish the end and purpose of their toil unless they are themselves highly cultivated? We have said above that a minister can not be the superior of all his people in all respects, but he must be above those he benefits in respect to the things in which they are benefited; he must be above his people in some regards, or he can not be a pastor to them. In an itinerant ministry a class of talents may be profitably employed which would be even detrimental in a settled ministry. A man of limited general attainments, but of deep piety and a correct knowledge of the rudiments of Gospel truths, may be very useful for a short time, or in an occasional service, even to a congregation whose general culture is superior to his own; because, in

respect to some few things, he is in advance of them.

But were such a man to become the settled pastor of such a Church, the settlement would be either a failure or a detriment; either after a short time, he would be dismissed, or the Church would at length sink to his level.

The minister, then, who is the permanent pastor of any people, must be above the average of his people in natural endowments and in learned acquirements, in purity and perfection of character, and in all the excellencies of a true humanity. A true Gospel minister is a true man; a thoroughly honest man, of sound judgment, of good social qualities, an average knowledge of common affairs, and a thorough and superior knowledge of God's holy Word.

# CHAPTER 19: CLASSIFICATION OF MINISTERIAL DUTIES AND OFFICES.

IN preceding pages we have endeavored to show that the Christian Church and its ministry are divine institutions, in the sense that it is God's will that such institutions should exist among men. We have treated of the call to the ministry, its nature and evidences, of ministerial prerogatives and qualifications. We come now to consider the classifications of ministerial duties and offices. The duties of the Christian ministry are numerous and varied. Men differ from each other in natural endowments and in their acquirements; in temperaments, tastes, habits, judgments, desires, and affections; and hence they differ greatly in their adaptations to the varied pursuits of life. Very naturally and reasonably, therefore, we should judge *a priori*, we should antecedently expect that the duties of the ministry would be divided into classes and that certain persons would be appointed to perform certain duties. We should anticipate that the principle, called in political economy the division of labor, would apply to the ministry as well as to other pursuits in life. The saying which, in modern parlance, has come to assume the dignity of a maxim, "the right man in the right place," is intended to express what is wise and what is essential to the greatest success in all kinds of enterprises. These reasonable anticipations in respect to the ministry are fully met in what the Scriptures teach on the subject. Under the Mosaic dispensation the duties of the temple were very specifically classified, and the different families in the sons of Aaron and Levi were by legal enactments assigned to different services in and about the temple. In the New Testament we read of apostles, prophets, evangelists, ministers, bishops, presbyters, deacons, pastors, teachers, and others, as persons separated and appointed to service in the ministry; and this, too, in the very beginnings of Gospel work, in the infancy of the Church, when its adherents were comparatively few and feeble. It is true, however, as is evident from the literal meaning and actual use of the terms, that several

of these might be and were applied to the same persons, to persons holding one and the same office. An apostle is one who is sent, an angel, a messenger; a prophet is one who either foretells future events or expounds mysteries, he is a teacher; an evangelist is a good angel, a messenger sent on an errand of good will; a minister is one who serves; a deacon is the same, a servant; a bishop is an overseer, a superintendent; a presbyter, is an aged man, or one who is in some way venerable, either by his years, or by his character, or by his office; a pastor has the care of a flock, is a shepherd. From these definitions it is manifest that several of these terms, and, in a limited sense, all of them, may be applied to the same person; but we affirm, and this affirmation will become apparent in what follows, that it is equally manifest that, in New Testament use, they are not so applied, that is, are not all applied to one and the same office, but are so used as to indicate what we have said above; namely, that the duties of the ministry are divided into classes, and that certain persons are appointed to certain offices.

Can any specific classification claim divine authority? Using the term "orders" in the sense common in ecclesiastical discussions, are there orders in the Christian ministry? Is the alleged maxim, "no bishop, no Church," true? On the other hand, is the affirmation that an episcopacy is contrary to apostolic usage, and, therefore, in violation of divine right, true? What about this much talked of doctrine of "orders" in the Christian ministry?

That, under the Mosaic dispensation, certain persons were appointed to certain services in the temple, and that the classification was very definite and specific, is too patent to admit of discussion. No one will make any issue as to this assertion. But the services of Christian congregations were not modeled after those of the temple, but after those of the synagogue; and the officers of the Christian Church did not resemble the different classes of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood, but were nearly, if not precisely, similar to those of the common synagogue.

But what we regard as furnishing determinative data for an answer to our present question is the fact that, after the commission given by our Lord himself just before his ascension to his disciples, to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," so far as New Testament

records furnish information on the subject, every appointment made to any office in the Church was made to meet an emergency, and was just adapted to the emergency which required the appointment. If this be so, and we propose to show presently that it is, then the conclusion is legitimate that the division of labor among the officers of the Christian Church is left to the Church itself; and is to be made from time to time as in the godly judgment of the Church the ever-varying circumstances and exigencies of human life may require.

When at Jerusalem the apostolic labors became so abundant that it was impossible to give due attention to minute matters, and when because of consequent neglect just cause of complaint arose, and complaint was actually made by the Greeks that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration, the apostles said to the Church, It is not meet that we leave the Word of God to serve tables: therefore, that we may give ourselves wholly to preaching the Word and to prayer, look ye out seven men, who shall have charge of these financial concerns. Under the circumstances, and because of this requirement, the deacons were elected and ordained. When the apostles had made converts in any given city, and were called to depart that they might preach the Gospel in other cities, they organized their converts into a Church and appointed the requisite officers. If the whole synagogue in which they had preached believed, the Church was already organized at their hands; the rulers of the synagogue became the elders and deacons of the Christian Church—possibly without any formal election or ordination. If, however, as was frequently the case, the rulers of the synagogue ejected them, and they established separate congregations, these new assemblies must be organized by the appointment and ordination of requisite officers. These were, so far as we know, always after the pattern of the Jewish synagogue. We shall hereafter look again at this particular. For the present we will say, the apostles in all such cases—that is, when they left one city to go to another—organized their converts into a Church by the appointment and ordination of elders and deacons, just what officers were necessary to conserve the fruit of their labors and carry forward the work of evangelizing the people. When a larger number of prophets and teachers than was necessary for the work of the Church were enjoying a pleasant vacation in the goodly fellowship of the Church at Antioch, and the Holy

Ghost said unto them, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them, the prophets and teachers forthwith laid hands on the appointed missionaries, in the name of the Church gave them letters of commendation, and sent them forth. Saul was already, by divine authority, an apostle, but was not so reckoned in the Church. We may call this appointment and ordination of these missionaries the origin of the class of ministers called evangelists. When Paul, having become a recognized apostle, was so successful in making converts, and the work specially on his hands became so onerous that it was impossible to organize Churches in all places where they were called for, he appointed Timothy and Titus, with authority to ordain elders in every city, and to set in order, according to instructions he gave them, all things necessary for the well-being and prosperity of the Churches.

It is common to call Timothy and Titus evangelists, but this does not designate their special office. All traveling ministers are evangelists, and of course in this sense it is proper to apply this term to Timothy and Titus; but their special appointment with authority to ordain elders makes them assistant apostles.

There are several kinds of service spoken of in the New Testament which are not distinctly defined; and there are also several different persons and classes of persons spoken of as prominent laborers, concerning whom we are not definitely informed either as to their appointment or the circumstances requiring it, or the precise nature of the service which they rendered. Paul says of three of the apostles, James, John, and Cephas, that they "seemed to be pillars in the Church." Probably nothing more is meant than that their activity and efficiency made them prominent, perhaps even among their fellow apostles; they were for some reason chief supports to the Church. Some were called prophets. Of these some foretold future events; but more were so called because they explained mysteries, were apt to teach. They eminently possessed the gift of imparting instruction. Some had the gift of tongues; some wrought miracles. Some were skilled in governmental affairs; some in healing. There were deaconesses. Some of the deacons, as Stephen and Philip, were preachers of the Gospel; but we do not know that any of the deaconesses were preachers. Paul mentions several whom he calls his fellow laborers; and some were his fellow prisoners. These were doubtless

his traveling companions and assistants. He speaks of the household of Stephanas, which "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Phoebe was a servant of the Church at Cenchrea, and a succorer of many and of Paul also; she went to Rome on business, for which she had need of assistance from the Church at Rome.

Priscilla and Aquila were Paul's "helpers in Christ Jesus." The beloved Persis "labored much in the Lord." And so of many others to whom Paul makes reference, in the salutations with which he usually closes his epistles, as persons rendering distinguished service in furthering the ends of the Gospel, of whose particular relations to the Church, whether official or not, and if official, as to what their particular office might be, we are not informed.

That many of these services were required by the exigencies of the times, and that many of the persons employed in them were employed only temporarily, is evident upon the surface of the record itself. Indeed, some of the duties belonging to the most prominent and important offices of the Church were temporary. Even the apostleship itself, if considered as to all that pertained to it during the lives of the apostles, all must admit was a temporary office. We shall hereafter show, that so much of what constituted the apostolic office necessarily passed away with the death of John, the last of their number, that those speak not unadvisedly who say that the office itself ceased entirely at John's death.

Indeed, the idea that a classification of Church duties, or in other words, that classes of Church officers, or in other words still, that orders in the Christian ministry, are in the New Testament distinctly designated, and by apostolic authority designated as essential to a Christian Church, is evidently preposterous. To say, "If no bishop, no Church," or to say, "If an episcopacy, no Church," is in either case and in both cases to say what common sense will reject instanter. It is only by the assumption of infallibility, or the affectation of great learning in ecclesiastical lore, that such nonsense ever becomes even respectable. When men affirm that the form of an ordinance or the ordination of the ministry is essential to the existence of a Christian Church in such a sense that all so-called Churches that have not that form or that ordination are not Christian Churches, and their ordinances and ministerial offices are not valid, it is pardonable

if such arrogance be rebuked with an impatient contempt. The very call to the ministry itself is not uniformly exclusive. Usually a call to the ministry is a call from manual labor to an exclusive devotion to religious duties; and yet Paul, when occasion required, labored with his own hands at tent-making, and supplied his own wants and the wants of those that were with him; and in all ages of the Church, God has honored men who were ordinarily engaged in secular pursuits, but who occasionally performed ministerial service, by giving them eminent success in evangelistic work. The Christian Church, its ordinances, and its ministry are sacred institutions; they are to the great Head of the Church as a bride to her husband; but to suppose that there is in the divine mind any such solicitude, interest, or affection towards mere externals and instrumentalities, mere ceremonies and official distinctions as High-churchism in any of its forms represents, is simply childish.

To what conclusion may we come at the present stage of our progress in this discussion?

It is pertinent, though not immediately connected with our topic, to remark: First, that as the Church is an institution organized for the mutual edification of its members in holiness of life and character, and for a testimony to unbelievers that the Christian religion is true and divine, it follows that all persons connected with the Church, whether official or private members, whether male or female, old or young, learned or unlearned, without respect to birth, nationality, color, or condition, all members of the Church, are entitled to give testimony in the public congregation, as well as in private conversation, as they have opportunity, as to what they know of the reality and divinity of religion; as to what they know, by an experience of its effects upon themselves, and by what they have observed of its effects upon others. It is not only the privilege of the entire membership thus to bear testimony, but it is also their duty so to do. The Old Testament Scriptures state it as a fact, either in the history of times then past, or in a prophecy of what would be in the future, that "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;" and from the directions given by St. Paul to the Corinthian Church respecting the order to be observed in their public assemblies, it is evident that at some of their gatherings they were accustomed to speak one after another as each should be inclined, and as opportunity might allow. In a word, the

Church, both ancient and modern, sometimes with more and at others with less frequency, has held social meetings, in which all its members alike were entitled to take part either in prayer or praise or testimony—public ministration, to this extent, was and is a common duty and privilege.

We remark, secondly, that as the Church is an institution, not only for the mutual edification of its members and for a testimony to unbelievers, but also an institution for the instruction and persuasion of the public mind, and as practical and experimental godliness is founded upon doctrinal truth, and as the doctrines of religion are themselves themes of the profoundest thought, and are inseparably connected with all philosophies and all sciences, it follows that the purposes and intents of Church organization require that a competent number of believers in Christ should separate themselves from secular pursuits and devote themselves exclusively, for life, to the study and proclamation of Gospel truth; and we find, in the, teachings of the Scriptures, not only that it is God's will that some members of his Church do thus devote themselves exclusively to Gospel ministrations, but also that He by his Spirit calls individual persons to this high and holy calling.

We remark, thirdly, that as it has pleased God not only to establish his Church in the earth as a monument to perpetuate the knowledge and remembrance of religion among men, but also to ordain that certain ordinances be observed, namely, baptism and the Lord's-supper, for the same monumental and other purposes; and as the Church has other duties besides the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments; such as the discipline of its members, the care of the poor, the visitation of the sick, the infirm, the aged, as well as prisoners and neglecters of religion; and as all these incur expense, and thus necessitate financial responsibilities; that is to say, as the Church is organized for the performance and execution of a large number of diverse and difficult acts, and as few men, if any, are competent to discharge efficiently so many obligations, or are adapted to services so diverse; and, again, as these duties are not only numerous and diverse, but also incongruous, it not being fit that those who preach the Gospel should leave the Word of God to serve tables, but should rather give themselves wholly to prayer and preaching of the Word, it follows that the official responsibilities of the

Church must be divided among its members, and that some devote themselves to one class of duties and others to others. And, it further follows, since Church organization necessitates financial transactions for which laymen may be supposed to be better qualified than clergymen; and since these financial responsibilities are to be met mostly or entirely by laymen, it follows that it is both proper and expedient that such offices should be filled by laymen—laymen may and should be office-bearers in the Church.

We remark, fourthly, that since there are, always have been, and will be yet more and more among believers, many of high natural endowments, of extensive learned acquirements, of profound piety, and entire consecration to God, whose relations to life, outside the Church, prevent them from an entire devotion to the ministration of the Word, but not from occasional services therein; and, again, since there are many who, though not qualified or adapted to the work of the ministry as a permanent vocation, are well qualified to be extensively useful as occasional assistants, it follows that men ordinarily employed in secular pursuits may be authorized and appointed to perform occasional ministerial service.

We remark, fifthly, that since the apostles, who were commissioned by our Lord to complete the inauguration of his kingdom upon earth, who acted, so far as we know, with co-ordinate authority, and who completed the canon of Scripture, and authoritatively organized Churches, did make such appointments to office as the existing circumstances seemed to require, and never after any prescribed model of Church government; and since the New Testament does not in any way furnish sufficient data for the inference that the head of the Church has prescribed and does require any specific form of ecclesiastical polity, it follows that the Church is left to the exercise of its godly judgment as to the form of its government, and may, as exigencies require, appoint such officers as in its judgment will, under the circumstances of the case, be most expedient.

So much for our conclusion thus far, but the controversies and discussions usual on the subject of Church polity render it necessary that several topics, but briefly referred to in the above discussion be more articulately considered.

First. Churches, during apostolic times and in times immediately successive, were organized after the model of the Jewish synagogue. If we should think of Christ as discussing in his own mind the externals of his proposed earthly kingdom; the forms and ceremonies to be observed by his people in their solemn assemblies, and specially the form of government to be adopted in his Church, what would we reasonably anticipate as his conclusion?

Is it that he would devise something entirely new among men? or is it that he would adopt such existing institutions as were adapted to his purpose? He himself kept the Passover and other Jewish feasts; he worshiped in the temple; he was baptized of John, saying, It was needful that we fulfill all righteousness; he frequently attended the synagogue and took part in its services, reading and expounding the law and the prophets; in a word, he was a scrupulous observer of all rites and ceremonies of the then existing religion, and manifested a profound respect for the existing institutions of his times.

*He* certainly would not innovate merely for the sake of innovation; so far as existing institutions would serve his purpose, so far we should expect that he would adopt them. It is antecedently probable that he did so. The external forms of the Jewish religion in the times of Christ were all found in those of the temple and of the synagogue. The temple service was local and national, whereas Christianity is for all times, places, and peoples. The temple service was too ceremonial, too ritualistic, too expensive, too ostentatious, required too much of splendor and display, for the simplicity and spirituality of the Christian religion. And besides being in a very large part of itself a system of types, shadows, and symbols of better things to come, and those better things thus symbolized being now at hand, the temple service was soon to pass away. There is no reason to anticipate that the Savior would construct his Church after the model of the temple; yea, more, it is even highly probable that he would not. The synagogue, in the opinion and estimation of the Jewish people, though not so sacred, was considered as practically even more valuable than the temple. It was to be found wherever a number of Jews sufficient to form a congregation resided. Its principal purpose, namely, the instruction of the people in the knowledge of the law of God, was not only in harmony, but was well-nigh identical, with the leading purpose of the Christian Church

—the teaching and disciplining of all nations in the knowledge of God through Christ.

The apostles, like their Master, were Jews, ardently attached in affection to the institutions and services of the Jewish religion. They frequently, both during the life-time of their Lord and after his ascension, attended the services of both the temple and of the synagogue. If, therefore, the inauguration of the ritualistic service and the form of Church polity were left to the judgment and decision of the apostles, it is reasonable to anticipate that they would so far as practicable adopt the existing institutions of the Jewish religion. Into whatever city, town, or village they went to preach the Gospel, in fulfillment of their great commission, they first entered into the synagogue, and there remained, reasoning and alleging out of the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ; and unless ejected by an overpowering opposition they continued their ministrations in the synagogue, and made no attempt to establish a separate congregation.

These considerations are sufficient of themselves to establish a strong probability that the Christian Church, so far as its external forms were established by the action of Christ and his apostles, was modeled after the fashion of the synagogue, and not of the temple. But what were the facts, so far as the New Testament informs us? We have just above said that the principal service—namely, the reading and expounding of the Scriptures—was the same in both, in the synagogue and in the Christian assembly. In both the elders sat in a semicircle, facing the congregation. The services were the same, and conducted in the same order: first, the reading of the law and the prophets; then the sermon, explaining the lessons read; and then the prayer.

In Christian assemblies, after the services common to both were concluded, the Supper of the Lord was administered. These last-mentioned facts are not distinctly stated in the New Testament itself, but what is there stated harmonizes perfectly with these statements, and the earliest histories of the Church invariably affirm that Christian worship was after this form and manner. The Lord's-supper was instituted at the close of the supper of the Passover, which was eaten in private dwellings. It, therefore, is not an appropriation of any existing institution either of the temple or synagogue, but is rather a substitution for the Passover.

Baptism was the service by which proselytes were initiated into the Jewish religion. It was never administered, so far as we know, in the temple; it belonged to the synagogue, but might be administered wherever proselytes were made, even in the wilderness, as in the case of John's baptism, or by the wayside, as in the case of the eunuch's baptism by Philip. The ordination of elders by the imposition of hands is wholly of the synagogue. The priests of the temple were never inducted into office by any service bearing any resemblance to ordination by the imposition of hands. The descendants of Aaron and Levi, when arrived at the proper age, were examined by the Sanhedrim as to their fitness physical and moral for the office of priests in the temple. If approved as free from physical and moral blemish they were clothed in white, and, entering into the temple, they joined their associates of the priesthood in the duties assigned them. Probably it is in allusion to this practice that in the Book of the Revelation the worthy are said to walk with Christ in white. The ordination, therefore, of the Christian ministry by the imposition of hands is a practice adopted by the Church from the model of the synagogue.

The sentence of excommunication in cases of Church discipline was the same thing as among the Jews was called casting out of the synagogue. The Christians called their assemblies synagogues—instance the passage in James:

"If there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring," etc.

The resemblance as to externals between the Christian Church and the Jewish synagogue was so perfect that the outside world uniformly considered Christians as a sect of Jews—instance, when Claudius issued a decree that all Jews should depart from Rome, Aquila and Priscilla, though eminent Christians, were compelled to depart.

Second Among the considerations connected with the present topic, deserving distinct statement, is the obvious fact that with the death of the apostles the apostolic office ceased. The apostles were inspired men; they were divinely inspired to complete the canon of the Holy Scriptures, and to determine authoritatively whatever might be necessary after the ascension of our Lord for the full establishment of the kingdom which

Christ had set up among men. To them, in a special sense, the keys of the kingdom were intrusted. They, with Christ as corner-stone, were the foundation of the Christian edifice. They were endowed with miraculous powers. After the pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost they authenticated the divinity of their mission by works which Christ said were even greater than those wrought by himself. Now, if we take away these special and miraculous endowments, and the offices and purposes for which these endowments were given, there will be nothing left except what is common to the entire Christian ministry. The apostles preached, baptized, administered the sacrament of the Supper; exercised discipline, ordained ministers; and so, also, by virtue of their office, the Church so directing, may all ministers of the Gospel do these same things. The apostolic office, in all that distinguished it from the ordinary ministry, by the nature and necessity of the case, expired with the death of its incumbents—the apostles had not and could not have any successors in that which was peculiar to themselves; in respect to those functions of their office, which are common to the Christian ministry all ministers are their successors. The true apostolic succession consists in a succession of faithful ministers of the Gospel of the grace of God; that is to say, faithful ministers are the successors of the apostles in the only sense in which the apostles may be said to have any successors.

Third. In the New Testament the terms bishop and elder are indiscriminately applied to the same person, or rather are terms used to designate the same office. The word in the original, which is translated bishop, is *episcopos*, which signifies an overseer, a superintendent; and the word translated elder, is *presbuteros*, which signifies an aged man, or a man for some cause regarded as venerable. Now that both of these terms might, with propriety, be applied to any minister of the Gospel is evident from their literal signification, and that it is probable that they were so applied is evident from the fact that in all ages and among all religionists it is a common thing to speak of religious teachers in this way, applying to them several different names, signifying the different characteristics and functions of their office as religious teachers and guides. This practice is very common now in our own times. Our religious teachers are called pastors, ministers, elders, clergymen, priests, fathers, *et cetera*. In other languages, besides the English, a similar diversity of

terms is used in precisely the same way. What is thus usual, natural in itself, and therefore probable, is, in New Testament usage, especially in reference to the two terms now under consideration, evidently matter of fact. The word *episcopos* occurs only five times in the New Testament; the first is in Acts xx, 28: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he has purchased with his own blood." In this passage the word translated "overseers" is, in the original, "*episcopous*." Who the persons addressed were is determined by the seventeenth verse of the same chapter: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the Church, and when they were come to him he said unto them"—and then follows his address from the eighteenth to the thirty-fifth verses inclusive. In this seventeenth verse the persons sent for, who came and were addressed as bishops, are called "*presbiterous*," presbyters, and the word is translated "elders." Plainly, then, the terms "bishops" and

"elders" are here applied to the same persons, are used in the same sense—they signify the same office.

Again, in the above quoted twenty-eighth verse, the Church is called a "flock," and these elders, bishops, are exhorted "to feed the Church of God;"

that is, to act toward the Church as shepherds or pastors—this is the same as if the term "pastor" had been applied to these persons in the same verse in which they are called bishops. Paul, with the same breath, calls them bishops, and enjoins fidelity in the office of a pastor; and Luke, the inspired writer of the Acts, and Paul's traveling companion at the time, calls the same persons presbyters, elders. This twentieth chapter of Acts is, of itself, determinative of our present question; the case is so clear that we have no need to look further. The words bishop and elder were titles of the same office, but since much is made of this question, we may examine the other passages in which these words are used. The next passage in which the word bishop occurs is Philippians i, 1: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." The terms saints,

bishops, and deacons, describe all the members of the Church at Philippi, or they do not—the category is exhaustive or it is not. If it is, then there were only two classes of official members in that Church; namely, "bishops" and "deacons;" for none will question but that by the term "saints" Paul intended to include all private members. If the category is not exhaustive and there was another class of officials called elders, it is quite unaccountable that they should be left out of the enumeration; for if there were, as it is alleged there were, three classes, or so-called orders of ministers, namely, bishops, elders, and deacons, the elders or presbyters were, as all will concede, the class most intimately connected with the people in their official relations, and therefore most prominent. To mention the bishops, who, if they were a distinct order, had only a general oversight, and sustained a remote relation to the members of the Church; and to mention also the deacons who, if there were three orders in the ministry, held only a subordinate office, and, at the same time, neglect to mention the presbyters or pastors, those most nearly related to the people, most endeared to them, and therefore most prominent among them, is surely quite unnatural, and may be pronounced as wholly improbable; but if the words bishop and elders are titles of the same office, and may be applied to the same persons, as we have seen they were in the passage quoted above from the Acts, then the address to the Philippians is natural—all is transparent, there is no difficulty in the case. The third instance in which the term *episcopos* occurs is 1 Timothy iii. 2: "A bishop must be blameless." In this third chapter of 1 Timothy Paul first describes the qualifications of a bishop, and then the qualifications of the deacons, and also of their wives, but makes no mention of, or allusion to, elders.

Throughout the epistle he is giving Timothy directions concerning different classes of persons, women in general, widows, servants, the aged, the young, and the rich. Nowhere in the epistle is there any allusion to the elders, if there were any such in the Church, as distinct from the bishops. The term elder does not occur except in the first and second verses of the fifth chapter, where evidently it expresses age and not office. "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father and the younger men as brethren, the elder women as mothers and the younger as sisters, with all purity." Here the argument is the same, only stronger, as in the quotation

from Philippians. To describe definitely and at length the qualifications of bishops and of deacons in an epistle of general admonition as to different classes of persons and officers, and to make no allusion whatever to the eldership, which is the most prominent and important office of the three, if there be three, is certainly very strange; it is, indeed not at all supposable. We affirm that the case furnishes reasonable proof that besides the apostles with their assistants there were, in apostolic times, no other officers of the Church recognized as regular and permanent but those that are here called bishops and deacons; that is to say, the proof is conclusive that the terms bishop and elder designate the same office. The next case is in the epistle to Titus: "For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee; if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God." Here we are informed that Paul left Titus in Crete, among other things, to ordain elders, if he should find candidates properly qualified. The requisite qualifications for the elders he is to ordain are said to be those that must be possessed by a bishop. The identification is perfect, the two terms in question are used for one and the same office. The only other use of the word *episcopos* is in 1 Peter ii, 25: "Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls." Here the term is applied to Christ, and, of course, has no bearing upon our present question.

However, it may be remarked that the word "*poimena*," translated shepherd, would be as literally translated by the word pastor; and then the passage would read "to the pastor and bishop of your souls;" and as the two terms are applied to the same person, Christ, they may be, they are, here synonymous; that is to say, this passage, in connection with those above considered, teaches that bishop, presbyter, or elder and pastor are titles of the same office. The word *presbuteroi*, translated elders, occurs sixty-seven times in the New Testament. In the Gospels and first ten chapters of the Acts it is applied to members of the Sanhedrim. That body was composed of "the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders," the latter of whom were laymen of age, wisdom, and ability. In the remaining chapters of the Acts and in the epistles, the term elders is applied either to the rulers of the synagogue or to the

corresponding officers of the Christian Church. The four and twenty elders spoken of in the book of the Revelation are evidently dignitaries of the heavenly assembly. Nothing bearing upon our present question, additional to what is written above, can be deduced from the passages where the word elder is used, as it usually is, singly and in a general way, to designate one or the other of these officers; namely, members of the Sanhedrim, rulers of the synagogue, and officers of the Christian Church. So much for the identification of the office of bishop and elder.

Fourth. We have above remarked that the Christian Church was constructed after the model of the synagogue, that the apostolic office terminated with the lives of the apostles, and that the terms bishop and elder are titles of the same office. We now come to our fourth remark; namely, that the New Testament does not distinctly define the office of a deacon. It is true, to be sure, that this remark might be made of any other office of the Church; but the relation of the office of deacon to the question of Church polity makes it needful that the fact should be distinctly noted.

It is more than probable that in New Testament times any good man, having a good intent, with ability, opportunity, and disposition to do a good work, might do it whether specially appointed thereto or not; and with but few exceptions, whatever that work might be, he would not be censured as an innovator or intruder. Probably all did what they could do for the edification of the Church and the good of the cause. But this is not saying there were no officials in the Church, nor that official members had no specified duties. There were offices in the Church; and that of deacon was one of them, and doubtless it had peculiar functions.

The word *diakonos* occurs thirty times in the New Testament. In twenty places it is translated by the word minister; in seven places by the word servant, and in three by the word deacon. In all these cases it is used in the sense of one who serves. A minister, a deacon, is a servant, differing from a *doulos*, a slave, only in the idea of a higher order. Of course, he is not a servant of his people in the sense that their will is his law, but that he labors for their good.

The paronyms of *diakonos* have the same generic meaning. *Diakonia* is a

ministry, a service; a ministration, an administration; and *diakoneo* is to minister, to administer, to serve, and to use the office of a deacon. Now, this use of the word shows that it is a title that may be applied to any minister of the Gospel, of whatever class or order; indeed, it may be applied to any officer of the Church, whether clergyman or layman.

All writers on Church polity, from the earliest times until now, so far as I know, take it for granted that the office of deacon in the Christian Church had its beginning with the appointment of the seven to attend to the daily ministration, recorded in the sixth chapter of Acts. This can be accounted for by no other supposition than that the early traditions on the subject were unanimous, and were so evidently correct as to admit of no question. We may, therefore, also admit the same thing without question. But it is not a little strange, if there are three orders of ministers in the Church by divine appointment, if this matter of three orders be so essential that a Church without them is not a Church, it is not a little strange, I say, that the term deacon is never applied in the New Testament to either of the seven. Indeed, no title is given to any of them except to Philip, and he is called an evangelist. More than this, we never hear anything about any of them after their ordination except Stephen and Philip, unless the Nicolaitans spoken of in Revelation, whom God and the Church hated, claimed Nicolas as their founder. From what we have thus far said, it is sufficiently evident that the New Testament does not distinctly define the office of a deacon, and we may reasonably infer from hence that such an office in the ministry is not by divine right and essential to the validity of the Christian ministry.

Were the deacons ministers or laymen? On the one hand, it is not disputed that they were originally appointed for a financial service, and, so far as the record informs us, appointed exclusively for this service. It is sometimes said, in reply to this, that they were appointed to perform a service which the apostles had previously rendered. But evidently this does not prove that receiving and disbursing the funds of the Church belongs to the ministerial office, any more than the fact that Paul wrought at tent-making is evidence that making tents is a ministerial duty. On the other hand, it is not disputed that Stephen and Philip were immediately after their appointment extensively engaged in preaching the Gospel; and the latter baptized converts in large numbers, and also performed many

miracles. We know nothing of the other deacons, what they were, or what they did. Again, the deacons were ordained by the imposition of hands. This is not decisive of the question; but though it is not proof that deacons were ministers, it looks very much that way, and is, under the circumstances, adequate ground for a fair presumption that they were. Again, in Paul's directions to Timothy respecting the ordination of ministers he speaks of the deacons in the same way as of bishops or elders, and specifies well-nigh the same qualifications in both cases. Again, in 1 Timothy, third chapter, after delineating the qualifications of a bishop, and then in immediate succession enumerating the qualifications of a deacon, in the tenth verse Paul says, "Let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless;" and then in the thirteenth verse he says, "They that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree." Here we evidently have a probation for the office of a deacon, and a probation in the office for promotion to a higher degree or office; all of which is perfectly natural, indeed, indispensable, if deacons be ministers and candidates for promotion in the ministry, but wholly anomalous and without a known parallel in history if the deaconship be merely a temporary financial office occupied only by laymen.

Our conclusion respecting the office of deacon in the Christian Church is, that it was inaugurated on this wise: on nomination by the membership, under apostolic supervision, seven men were by apostolic authority appointed to the office, and were ordained by the imposition of apostolic hands; that others were, probably in all the Churches, afterwards appointed and ordained in the same way and by the same authority; that the office has continued in the Church from that time to the present; that its duties are not distinctly defined in the New Testament; that it was a ministerial office of subordinate rank, including among its duties at the first some attention to financial matters; and that the functions of the office were well understood in post-apostolic times, and are with sufficient accuracy described in the early writings of the Church—from all of which we infer that the existence of such an office in the ministry has apostolic sanction, but is not by divine right, or, in other words, is not essential to the validity of Church organization.

A Church may or may not have deacons in its ministry, as it in its godly

judgment may deem expedient, and in either case it is equally a Christian Church according to the will of God.

The establishment of different grades in the ministry is commended by the fact that it furnishes opportunity for a full and fair trial or probation, by which the Church may the better determine before full admission to all the functions of its ministry whether the candidates possess the requisite qualifications. It also furnishes the candidates themselves with better opportunities for deciding whether they are divinely called to this work; and it is also to them a proper stimulus and incentive to fidelity, because here, as every-where else, men prove by faithfulness in the less their qualifications for and their title to the greater. That different grades in the ministry are not an inexpediency is evident from the fact that to them no valid objection can be made. The system has no disadvantages; it works no detriment. It has some advantages, is a very proper thing in itself, and is therefore, to them that like it, a very good thing; provided, always, that its abettors never set up for it the preposterous claim of a divine right.

Fifth. Our fifth remark in this connection is, that the question as to the number of orders in the ministry, except with high-churchmen, is a question void of significance. What is the meaning of this word orders? In the vocabulary of the high-churchman it has a distinct and well-understood definition; it is a rank, a class, a division of men, made by divine appointment. It implies that it is the will of God that the ministers of his Church should be divided into classes; and, that it is so God's will that such classification should exist that it is essential to the validity of Church organization, a so-called Church without orders in its ministry is not a valid Church. The question, How many orders are there in the Christian ministry? is to a High-churchman an intelligent question, and he answers it numerically.

He says there are three, bishops, presbyters, and deacons—he knows what he says, and most distinctly means what he says. This distinction of orders implies, further, that the peculiar functions of each are by divine authority exclusive. Instance, the right of ordination belongs, by divine appointment, exclusively to the episcopacy; so that, a so-called minister not episcopally ordained is not a Christian minister. The ordinances administered by such a one are not valid; marriage by such is not

matrimony, and the parties joined together by ministers not episcopally ordained live in adultery. A High-churchman attaches a most significant and tremendous meaning to his word orders.

The theory opposed to these preposterous assumptions of Romanists and High-churchmen is, that there is no divine requirement for any classification of ministerial duties whatever. God has signified in his Word that it is his will that certain men, whom he calls, shall devote themselves to the service of his Church; and that the Church shall recognize persons giving evidence of such a divine call as its ministers; shall appoint them to the ministry, authorize them to discharge the functions of the ministerial office, shall cooperate with them in their work, and contribute to their temporal support. But as to the mode of their election, the forms and ceremonies of their ordination, the persons or officers by whom they shall be ordained, the division of their labors, and the ranks, classes, or orders into which they themselves shall be divided, the New Testament gives no distinct directions, and therefore as to these things there are no divine requirements; but the Church is left to determine them at its discretion, provided, always that in its action it does not contravene any plainly revealed principle of Church government. Now, if to one holding this theory the question, How many orders are there in the Christian ministry? be asked, and the term orders be accepted in the sense of High-churchism, the only answer he can give, consistent with his own theory, is that there are no orders at all; there is no divine requirement for any classification whatever; all Christian ministers, so far as divine right is concerned, are co-ordinate. That is to say, he has in his theory no use for the term orders, in the sense in which Romanists and High-churchmen use it.

But it will be said that the word orders, as used by Protestants, generally has another signification; namely, a distinction of classes in the ministry by the conventional decisions of the Church. In this sense, the only answer most Protestants can give, consistent with their theory, to the question, How many orders are there? is, just as many as the Church pleases to make. Plainly, then, in any sense, the question as to the *number* of orders is forestalled, and in consistency ought to be discounted by the decision of the antecedent question, whether there are any orders at all by divine right.

It is not very uncommon, in the parlance of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to say that there are two orders in the ministry. Let us examine this a little and see how it looks. We have nominally three classes, bishops, elders, and deacons. In theory it is affirmed that bishops and elders are of the same order; so we have two orders, presbyters and deacons. Now we do not claim that the two are by divine right, for we have always recognized the English Wesleyan Church as a true and valid Christian and Methodist Church, and they have no deacons and but one ordination for their elders. The distinction then is with us, by conventional decision. On what is this distinction founded? Our bishops are differentiated from our elders by at least three very important prerogatives, and our elders differ from our deacons by only one prerogative, and that a very unimportant one. Necessities excepted, the right of ordination, the power to station traveling ministers, and the presidency of the General Conference, are exclusive prerogatives of the bishops; but the only prerogative possessed by an elder not possessed by a deacon is the right to read the consecrating prayer over the elements in the sacrament of the Lord's-supper. Now, to call the distinction between a bishop and an elder a distinction of *office*, and that between an elder and a deacon one of order, and at the same time to attach any sacredness or important elevation in degree to the idea of an order, not belonging to an office, is, to say the least of it, a strange misnomer. If the word order means a class of ministers ordained by the imposition of hands, then, of course, all will agree that we have three orders. If the word means simply a class of ministers, made a class in no other way than by a conventional classification of ministerial duties and an assignment of one class of duties to one class of ministers, and another class of duties to another class of ministers, then the Methodist Church has at least seven orders, bishops, traveling elders, traveling deacons, local elders, local deacons, traveling ministers on trial, and local preachers not ordained; if we add superannuates and supernumeraries, we have nine; if we further add editors, book agents, secretaries of Church societies and presidents and professors of colleges and academies, all of whom may be legally constituted ministers, then we have at least thirteen orders in our ministry. Very plainly the word orders, in any sense in which the word is of any use, has no place in a Methodist vocabulary. Methodists have no need for the use of the word, and the same may be said of all others,

except Romanists and High-churchmen.

## CHAPTER 20: EPISCOPACY.

EPISCOPACY was a natural growth from, or a development of, the state of things inaugurated by the apostles. As may be naturally expected, no important change occurred during the first century. In the extant writings of those times all allusions to the matter of Church polity conform substantially to similar allusions in the New Testament, Clement of Rome, who wrote about A.D. 95; Polycarp, a disciple of John, who wrote about A. D. 140; and Justin Martyr, a contemporary of Polycarp,—all address ministers as presbyters and deacons, or bishops and deacons, in the same way that they are addressed in the epistles of Paul, indicating clearly that up to and during their times the chief ministers of the Church belonged to one or the other of two and only two classes. In the writings of Ignatius, A. D. 116, a distinction between bishops and presbyters first makes its appearance. It is said by some that these so-called epistles of Ignatius are forgeries, and by others that they are interpolated copies of original epistles. But even if these epistles of Ignatius are discounted as unworthy of confidence, the subsequent histories make it evident that early in the second century changes in the externals of the Church began to appear, and that episcopacy had its beginning among the earliest developments of post-apostolic times. To our thought a careful consideration of the facts of the case will make it appear that an episcopal form of Church government was the result of a natural growth from the apostolic germ; was the natural, if not the necessary, result of development.

The Church as it was in the time of Polycarp and Ignatius could not remain stationary; it must either dwindle and become extinct, or it must prosper, develop its powers, and extend its dimensions. Change is inseparable from growth—the Church in maturity could not be the same as in its infancy—and change is in nothing more inevitable than in external forms. Nothing short of a divine prohibition expressed in positive terms, either by Christ himself or by his inspired apostles, could prevent some variations in the institutions of the Church from the forms left by its founders. No well-defined system of Church polity was

instituted; no directions were left to guide the Church in its future action. The Church for the time being took on such forms as circumstances required, and it was left to its own discretion to determine what forms its future exigencies might demand. The Great Head of the Church foresaw what would be, and did not impose any prohibitory interdicts to prevent it, or any precautionary prophecies to forewarn the Church against it.

Episcopacy did actually arise, and for at least twelve hundred years was, without opposition, the only existing form of Church government throughout the Christian world. It has always been, and is now, the form adopted by a very large majority of the Churches naming the name of Christ.

For the details of the rise and progress of episcopacy the reader must be referred to the ecclesiastical histories. Our purpose does not require us to refer to them. The authorities, so far as they are reliable, give precisely the same account of the rise of this system, as to its essential characteristics, that one would naturally suppose it to be, forming his judgment from the facts, statements, and references recorded in the New Testament. With the Acts and Epistles as our guide and the basis of our judgment, we think of the Christian Church during the first seventy years of its history as consisting of assemblies of believers in Christ, united together by a form of association as simple as can well be conceived. Their meetings are held in the synagogues of the Jews wherever they have liberty to use them; or in seminaries of learning, as in the school of Tyrannus; or in private dwellings, as in the house of Stephanas—or, in a word, in any obtainable place most convenient. When assembled, they were seated, whenever practicable, after the manner of the synagogue, the elders sitting in a semicircle facing the people.

The elders, where their organization was complete, were ten in number; sometimes less, never more, it is said, in a single congregation. Of these, one corresponding to the ruler of the synagogue was *the elder, presbyter, bishop, pastor*, perhaps, as in, Revelation, the angel of the Church; two others were assistant pastors,—the three corresponding to what are called the "rulers of the synagogue." The ten constituted the presbytery of the Church, or its official board. It is probable that the three rulers were ordained ministers, the assistant pastors being as such authorized, in the

absence of *the* pastor, to administer the sacraments. The other seven elders might be ministers or laymen; probably most or all of them were laymen, elevated to this honor, as were "the elders of the people" in the synagogues of the Jews, for their wisdom, their gravity, or their age.

The services consisted, first, of the reading of the Scriptures by one of the elders, probably one of the assistant pastors, to whom that duty was specially assigned; after which the pastor expounded the lesson read and made an exhortation to the people. This service, however, was not restricted; the pastor might give liberty to anyone in the congregation to address the people.

At least, this is probable, since it not unfrequently occurred in the synagogue—instance, when Paul and his company came to Antioch in Pisidia, and had gone into the synagogue and sat down, "after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." The sermon or exhortation ended, the pastor offered prayer, and the people responded Amen. This done, the sacrament of the Lord's-supper was administered, after which the service was closed.

The jurisprudence of the primitive Church is more imperfectly delineated in the New Testament than is its polity in other respects. It is doubtful whether the instructions of our Lord as to our treatment of a brother who trespasses against us has any respect whatever to Church action. It may be that our Savior had in mind simply a case of personal difference, and not at all a case of public scandal; if so, the word Church means individual members of the Church. We are first to seek a settlement privately between him and ourselves alone, then in case of failure to take two or three; and failing in this attempt, to take several. But suppose the case be a case of immoral conduct, and, if known, of public scandal, requiring in the last resort Church discipline. It is not certain whether the word Church means the entire members or the official council. In Paul's reproof of the Corinthian Church because of their indulgence towards the incestuous person, the reproof implies a censure upon the Church generally, and so far forth is an argument for Congregationalism; but in his stern assurance that if he himself were present matters would be differently disposed of, we have a strong intimation that disciplinary

authority pertained to the ministry. But we know nothing positively respecting the method in which charges were preferred, to whom preferred, of whom the court of trial was composed, what was the method and order of procedure, whether there was any right of appeal, how courts of appeal were constituted, by whom sentence was pronounced; indeed, we have well-nigh no information whatever as to disciplinary procedure.

In the infancy of the Churches it is probable that all the official members rendered their services without any financial remuneration; but it is evident that in all cases where the people were able to contribute an adequate support for their pastor they were required to do so, and the pastors were required to give themselves wholly to the Word of God and prayer. This is evident from the frequent exhortations given in the Epistles on: this subject; they "that were taught in the Word" were required "to communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." The leading Church enterprise of the times was the dissemination of the Word, and in this work all shared as they had opportunity. When scattered abroad by persecution they went every-where preaching the Word, as was the case when Saul made havoc of the Church after the martyrdom of Stephen. And when the Church had rest and was prospered, missionaries were sent forth with letters of commendation, as in the case of Paul and Barnabas, sent from the Church at Antioch. This work of evangelization must have occupied the entire attention of the Church and employed all its resources during the years of the first century. There was neither occasion nor opportunity for devising Church polities for the administration of the affairs of established and prosperous Churches. This work began when the condition of the Church required it, which state of things began to appear early in the second century.

From the first the pastors administered some form of government. They presided over the presbytery. The pastor was the angel of the Church, the man in whom centered the chief authority. When there were several Churches in the same city the presbyters of all the Churches assembled together for consultation concerning the general interests of the cause in the city where they dwelt, and for co-operation in spreading the Gospel in the regions beyond. In these assemblies some one must preside. As is usual in such cases, the one appointed to this honor would be the pastor

of the most prominent Church, or the man most distinguished and most deserving of such honor. Soon, when the general interests of the Church in such a city required the entire attention of some one, the president of the metropolitan presbytery would very naturally be called to such an office, and thus become another and a higher officer than had previously existed. In the nature of the case such a one would exercise some sort of supervision over all the Churches; over all the ministers and members of all the Churches included in the jurisdiction of the presbytery in which his office originated; he became the angel of the whole Church in that city and its suburbs. Soon he was distinguished from other presbyters by such titles as would indicate his office, and the word *episcopos*, bishop, was seized upon and used for this purpose. It had previously been indiscriminately applied to all presbyters, but from this point onward it began to be used exclusively to designate not a "*pastor gregis*" merely, but a "*pastor gregis et pastorum*"—it was the title of him who exercised a general oversight; who was an overseer of the Churches both as to the ministry and the membership. This is the origin of episcopacy. For the details of its progress from this humble, natural, and praiseworthy commencement to its terrible corruption and prostitution as seen in the assumptions of the eastern patriarchs and western popes, we must look to the ecclesiastical histories. It is sufficient here to say, that bishops of cities became bishops of provinces, of states, and of empires; became archbishops, patriarchs, and popes; and became thus by the same processes by which power is usually centralized, and by which ambitious men make for themselves high places and occupy them.

## THEORIES.

The theory of High-churchism, so-called, affirms that there are three orders in the Christian ministry by divine appointment. That is to say, it is God's will that there should be in his Church bishops, presbyters, and deacons; and it is so his will that without them a Christian Church can not be constituted—any so-called Church whose ministry does not consist of three orders, a Church which has not bishops, presbyters, and deacons is not a Church; its so-called ministers are innovators or pretenders, and its ordinances are not valid Christian ordinances. According to this theory the ordination of ministers and the confirmation of the people belong exclusively to the episcopacy; the imposition of hands by any others, if

made in the name of God for a religious purpose, is, if not sacrilegious, at best but a useless and an unmeaning ceremony. The right of ordination, according to this theory, is derived from an episcopal ordination, transmitted in an unbroken succession from the apostles; and this regular succession is essential to the validity of ministerial functions. No man not in that succession has or can have any right to exercise the functions of the ministerial office. Episcopal authority is the highest court of appeal, its decisions are final and obligatory, it extends mediately or immediately to all matters pertaining to the Church; to it all members and ministers of the Church are in some sense responsible. Episcopacy is, in the fullest sense, what the word indicates, an overseeing, a superintendency; it is a supervision with authority to command.

The alleged grounds on which these high claims are founded are, as held by some, that God's will respecting the constitution of his Church is indicated by the polity of the Mosaic Church. The Aaronic priesthood foreshadowed the episcopacy, its high priest the Papacy, and the Levitical priesthood symbolized the presbytery. The more common argument derives the episcopacy from the apostleship, and the presbyters and deacons from the orders so denominated in the New Testament.

The further proofs alleged are drawn chiefly from the writings of the Fathers, and from the facts of ecclesiastical history. In reply to all arguments from this source we are content simply to say that so far as we are concerned, we not only affirm that the fathers were in favor of an episcopacy, but also admit that some of them have said what favors the high claims of Papacy. Their testimony, however, in this matter, is not with us decisive and final. Such claims as those that constitute High-churchism can, with us, be sustained by nothing short of a plain and unequivocal "thus saith the Lord."

Beyond the mere fact that there were in the Church in apostolic times apostles, presbyters, and deacons, the only Scripture proofs of high-churchism alleged are those which appear to say that the Church is built upon the rock, Peter, and that Peter is intrusted with the keys of the heavenly kingdom.

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates

of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

(Matt. xvi, 18, 19.) In Matthew xviii, 18, these same words, "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," occur in connection with our Lord's instructions respecting procedure in case a brother trespass against us, and evidently refer to the act of forgiving an injury by trespass, or of retaining censure and condemnation because of trespass unrepented. In John xx, 21-23, it is written: "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; and when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." What did our Lord mean by these weighty words? We reply, whatever he meant he did not mean to resign his own place as head of the Church and install Peter therein; he did not appoint Peter to be God's vicegerent upon earth, he did not give to Peter the power to open and shut the gates of eternal life by forgiving or at his own option retaining the sins of his fellow-men; he did not confer upon Peter sole power of perpetuating the Church and its ministry; he did not authorize him by the imposition of hands to transmit the headship of the Church and the power to pardon sin to successors, and through those successors to others unto the end of time. We affirm that whatever he said and did, he did not say and do these things; and we make this affirmation, first, because the ideas themselves are too tremendously awful to be, even for a moment, supposable; and, secondly, because these passages admit of a rational and Scriptural interpretation which involves no such preposterous doctrines.

The words of our Lord seem to represent, they do represent, that Peter personally sustained some prominent relation to the Church; a relation signified by that of a foundation to the structure erected upon it. The Church was, in some sense, built upon Peter; and so it was upon all the "prophets and apostles, Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." Peter preached the sermon that inaugurated the dispensation of the Holy Ghost; he also introduced the Gospel dispensation to the Gentile world—he turned one key at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and another in

the house of Cornelius.

But again, Peter's confession of faith, "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," is eminently the rock on which Christ builds his Church in the world—such a profession is and always has been the condition of membership in his Church. The power of the keys may more Scripturally be regarded as the power authoritatively to announce the conditions on which the pardon of sin may be granted than a power to grant pardon *ex cathedra*. But, lastly, if extraordinary prerogatives, such as, or similar to, those claimed by Papacy were conferred by the words of our Lord now under consideration, those prerogatives were conferred exclusively upon the apostles. They were divinely inspired to complete the canon of the Scriptures, and to inaugurate much that pertained to the establishment of the Church. By their inspiration they were rendered infallible for the purposes for which they were inspired; but in respect to those things they had no successors. They had. power to bind and loose as no other men since have ever had. To interpret these Scriptures in a sense solely applicable to the apostles, and then apply such interpretation to pretended successors, is a most palpable *non sequitur*.

Papacy and High-churchism, as to fundamental principles and outline doctrines, have been sufficiently discussed in preceding pages. That their claims are wholly preposterous has been shown. from the obvious fact that the apostles had no successors, and that, from the nature of their office, they could not have any; from the obvious fact that during the apostolic times the terms bishop and elder signified the same office; or, in other words, that there was but one office besides the diaconate, which office was designated interchangeably by those two titles; from the fact that the Christian Church was modeled after the synagogue; and from the further fact that episcopacy had its origin in times subsequent to the close of the Scripture canon. Another historic fact, not alluded to above, fatal to the pretensions of papacy and High-churchism, is, that in the rise and progress of the hierarchy, even as it existed in the second century, but more especially in the form which it subsequently assumed, and in which it has continued until the present, it was modeled, not after the Mosaic economy, nor after apostolic practice, but after the civil polity of the Roman Empire. Constantine made special efforts to make the polity of the Church agree as nearly as possible with that of the State. To this end

he not only modified the polity of the Church, but also changed the Roman jurisprudence and the constitution of the empire. What now exists in the Roman Church is not so much a transmission by an unbroken succession of apostolic authority and practice, as an imitation of, and a succession to, the glories and splendors of the Roman Empire. In these things we see not so much of Christ and the apostles, as of Csar and the emperors.

*Moderate Episcopacy, or Low-churchism.*—This theory does not claim any divine right for an episcopal form of government; it agrees with well-nigh all who oppose High-churchism in affirming that no specific form of Church polity is prescribed in the New Testament, and that, therefore, the Church is left to adopt such form as, in its judgment, best meets the requirements of the case.

It, however, claims that episcopacy with suitable checks and restraints does not contravene any principle, doctrine, or practice of the New Testament; and also that it conforms with New Testament teachings as nearly as any system adapted to the changed circumstances of the Church could be expected to conform. It also claims that episcopacy is adapted to conserve the unity of the Church; is itself a connectional bond, and serves to strengthen and maintain all other bonds by which the several Churches are united in one communion; is an efficient agent, and imparts efficiency to all other agencies by which the purposes of the Church are accomplished; and, in a word, is, so far as human wisdom is competent to determine, the best form of Church government known among men. It arose early in the history of the Church, has withstood the changes of centuries, has been at all times the prevailing polity, and for many centuries was, without controversy or dissent, the form of government adopted by the universal Church.

*Presbyterianism.*—This differs not essentially in what it affirms of fundamental principles from moderate episcopacy. It, however, rejects episcopacy in form and name, affirms the equality of ministers, and has therefore but one order; namely, presbyters. Its elders and deacons are held to be laymen; and the president of the presbytery is only a moderator of the assembly, a "*primus interpares*"—first among equals. Presbyterians, generally with apparently strong convictions, affirm that

in their judgment a government by the presbytery conforms more nearly than any other to the New Testament example. They do not, however, insist that their form of government is divinely required; they frankly fraternize with Churches of different polities.

*Congregationalism.*—This is fundamentally an affirmation not only that all authority originates in the consent of the governed, but also that, essentially, power must abide where it originates. It is professedly a government of the people, by the people. The primary assembly is final court of appeal. They may appoint officers; but officers are their servants, to do their will. Though power is delegated, it is still retained; so that the action of officers may be reviewed and reversed by the original constituency.

In a word, all governmental power, legislative, judiciary, and executive, originates in, and ever remains with, the congregation. This is in substance f~e theory. The practice may in some instances conform; but generally, as we see it, the theory is found to be impracticable. According to our observation, there is no Protestant Church in which the ministry practically exercise more power than in the Congregational Church. It is said that this is so because their ministers are by their culture and piety entitled to the respect and confidence of their people; that they have influence and power because power of right belongs to men of excellence and worth, such as they are. We reply, So it is, and so it ought to be; so would the Head of the Church have it, and so has he ordained. It is of divine appointment that the ministry be invested with prerogatives, and that they be such in their character as entitles them to such prerogatives. They are to have power, and are to be such men as will exercise that power for the glory of God and the good of men.

Theoretic Congregationalism is mostly a protest against episcopacy and Presbyterianism, especially the former; and the objection usually urged against episcopacy is, that it comes of a worldly ambition and the love of power, and results in tyranny and oppression towards the people. The proofs are usually found in the Dark Ages, it being assumed that the corruptions of those times came in because of episcopacy, and for the want of Congregationalism. We reply, the promise of God that the gates of hell should not prevail against his Church is security against the

extinction of the Church in any case; so that when we speak of any form of government as contributing to the prosperity of the Church, or as working a detriment, we speak humanly. When a Congregationalist says the corruptions of the Romish Church came in through episcopacy he speaks humanly; and in the same way, speaking humanly, one may say that but for episcopacy the corruptions that then assailed the church would have overwhelmed it, and it would have become extinct. If there had been in those dark days no conserving power above what Congregationalism can afford, in all human probability, the Christian Church would have been blotted from the face of the earth. The fact is, that corruption, tyranny, and oppression, either in state or Church, come not from the form of the government, but from the character and disposition of depraved men. One form of government may be a better protection against these things than another form; but certainly the annihilation of government cannot be either a preventive of, or a protection against, the evils that come from the desires. and designs of bad men. Theoretic Congregationalism is well-nigh no government at all. To prevent the abuse of power it disallows its existence.

No man must be invested with prerogatives, lest he misuse them.

The theory is founded upon a wrong interpretation of the doctrine that the just powers of government are derived from the consent of the governed. In the sense in which the theory assumes that this doctrine is to be taken, the doctrine itself is not true. When society is constructed according to the will of God men are born into governments both civil and ecclesiastical, and are naturally under obligation to accept the responsibilities imposed by governmental relations. They may refuse to do so, as they may refuse to earn their bread by honest labor, but such refusal is rebellion against God.

Loyal obedience to the mandates of government comes from the consent of the governed; but the obligation thereto comes from the will of God, is required by the greatest good, and is therefore an obligation naturally binding upon all rational beings. The idea that the investment of authority and power with the few naturally and necessarily tends to the oppression of the many, is subversive of all government; to affirm it, is to affirm the impossibility of a just and equitable administration. To affirm

that the rights of the individual are better secured by a pure democracy than by a representative government, is to affirm what is not true; and it is not any more true when the affirmation has respect to legislative enactments than it is when affirmed of judicial decisions. And evidently any man feels that his rights are more secure when they depend upon a verdict of a jury of twelve men than when they are determined by a majority vote of a popular assembly.

It is sometimes alleged that Presbyterianism and episcopacy, specially the latter, tends to a minifying of the people intellectually and socially, so that under a Congregational form of Church government the people attain a higher culture. For illustration, it is allowed that the episcopal form of government in the Methodist Church contributes to the efficiency of that Church in missionary and pioneer work and in revival labors; but it is alleged that its episcopacy is a bar to the subsequent training and development of the people, so that the people of the Church are less intelligent and refined than they would be if their Church government were more democratic. This is purely an assumption. It has its origin in comparisons made between Methodist Churches, composed of members most of whom were recently gathered from the highways and hedges, and Congregational and other Churches which were venerable when Methodism was born. Inferences from such comparisons are evidently unreliable. But on this question a positive refutation is at hand.

History does not show an example of a people who, according to their ability and opportunity, have done more in the work of educating themselves and others than have the people of the Methodist Church during the century of their existence.

Congregationalists generally allow that Church polity is to be determined by the conventional agreement of the Church itself. Some, however, are of a different opinion. There is at this writing lying before me on my table a work of much learning and labor, in which the attempt is made to demonstrate that Congregationalism is by divine right; that the New Testament Church was distinctly democratic; that it is plainly revealed that it is God's will that his Church should be Congregational as to its polity; that episcopacy is itself a corruption, a violation of God's order; and that any other and all forms of Church government not

Congregational are naturally and necessarily detrimental to soundness in doctrine and purity in life. This is high-churchism at the opposite end of the line; and though it comes from one who makes much of the argument from the assumed superiority of Congregationalists in culture, we venture to say the whole argument is a failure, and the doctrine is not according to truth.

We conclude that, since executive efficiency requires the concentration of power, since the Church is eminently an organization for evangelizing the world, since well-organized responsibility is adequate protection against the abuse of power, since confessedly an episcopal form of government is an efficient instrument for the propagation of the Gospel, and since no form of Church polity is divinely required, but the Church is left at its own option to select that form which in its judgment is best adapted to its requirements, we conclude that an episcopacy, properly guarded with checks, balances, and suitable responsibilities, may be adopted by any Church choosing so to do; and that the system may be made efficiently promotive of God's glory and the good of men.

# CHAPTER 21: THE POLITY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

1. THE term Methodist is simply a distinguishing title. The term Methodist was applied to Mr. Wesley and his associates at Oxford at first in derision; signifying that, in the opinion of those who applied the term to them, they were excessively and foolishly methodical in their habits of life.

The term was accepted and used by those to whom it was applied, as signifying what they desired and designed to be, namely, men who regulated their lives according to a correct and proper method. Methodists of our time do not claim to be more methodical in their habits of life than are their fellow-Christians of other Churches. The term has lost its original significance, and is now used merely as a name to distinguish us from others; especially from other episcopal Churches.

2. The organization is a valid Christian Church. The associations formed by Mr. Wesley and his associates were originally called societies. They were designed to be and were mere voluntary associations of persons for mutual improvement in experimental and practical godliness. They were not designed to affect, and did not at first at all affect, Church relations. Their members were all members of the Church of England; they attended its regular services, and received the sacraments at its altars; the meetings of the societies were not held in Church hours. Mr. Wesley himself continued during life a regular presbyter in the established Church. The same state of things arose in America and continued during the existence of the colonial government. Soon after the close of the Revolutionary War most of the clergymen of the establishment, many of whom were Tories, left the country and returned to England. This left the people without the sacraments, and the Methodist societies demanded, even clamorously, that their preachers should assume the office of elders, and administer to them the sacraments. The preachers did not think

themselves authorized so to do; and appealed to Mr. Wesley for relief. He, as he said, regarded the Methodist societies of America as sheep in the wilderness, without a shepherd, and felt himself providentially called upon to make such provisions as that these shepherdless sheep might have pastoral care; might receive the sacrament of the Lord's-supper, and consecrate their children to God in Christian baptism. Accordingly he ordained Dr. Coke a presbyter of the Church of England, giving him authority to exercise the office of a bishop, calling him a superintendent, which is only another name for the same thing. He sent him to America directing him to ordain Francis Asbury to the same episcopal office. These two, Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury, were to have a general superintendency of all the Methodist societies in America; were to travel at large through the length and breadth of the land, and ordain elders wherever suitable candidates could be found whose services as presbyters were required by the exigencies of the people.

Mr. Wesley prepared a form of discipline for the use of the people called Methodists, in America, which discipline contained articles of religion, general rules of society, and a ritual for ordination and other services of the Church. The preachers of America, in General Conference assembled, received Dr. Coke in his office as a bishop; they elected Francis Asbury to the same office, and he, according to Mr. Wesley's directions, was ordained as a bishop in the Church. The conference adopted the discipline as their Constitutional and statute law, and thus became a regularly and fully organized Christian Church. The Methodists of America were no longer a mere aggregation of societies, organized within the pale of the English Church, but were themselves a properly constituted evangelic Church of God. The General Conference, at first an assembly composed of all preachers who chose to attend, soon became a delegated body, composed of representatives elected by the several annual conferences. The book of discipline adopted has, subject to quadrennial revision by the General Conference, remained the law of the Church until the present. The assemblies of the people, from then until now, have been "congregations of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God has been preached and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

The Methodist societies of America, in General Conference assembled, by their adoption of the Discipline as their constitutional and statute laws, and by their acceptance of Dr. Coke in his office, as their bishop, became a *visible Church of Christ*.

3. The Methodist Episcopal Church, as its name indicates, is an *episcopal* Church—not a congregational Church nor a presbyterian Church, but a true and valid episcopal Church. Its bishops have been set apart by three distinct elections and ordinations; they were first elected and ordained to the office of a deacon in the Church; then they were elected and ordained to the office of an elder; and then they were as distinctly elected and ordained to the office of a bishop in the Church of God; and neither of these services was unmeaning; they were not empty ceremonies, but each was significant of power and authority conferred, and each successive ordination conferred what did not belong to that which preceded it.

The power of ordination and the right to station the pastors belong exclusively to the bishops. Now, the act by which a minister is ordained is that which confers the right to administer the ordinances; and the act by which a given man is made the pastor of a given people is that which gives existence to a pastorate. The bishop, then, has sole power to do two things, without which a Christian Church cannot exist. May it not be said that such a Church is founded upon episcopal authority? that it is essentially episcopal? It is not pertinent here to inquire how the bishops came by their power—this is not now the question; we are looking at the thing as it is. Looking at the Methodist Episcopal Church as it is, we affirm, for the reasons above given, that it is essentially and fundamentally an episcopal Church, without the discount of anything essential to a government by bishops, and without any leanings towards anything else. There are three distinct classes of ministers, as distinct as any three corresponding classes in any episcopal Church that ever was. If we must use the word order, and may say we have two orders in our ministry, we must, for a stronger reason, say we have three orders; for the episcopacy is differentiated from the eldership by an incomparably greater difference than the eldership is from the diaconate.

Again, while the pastoral jurisdiction of each elder and each deacon is limited to a given locality, the jurisdiction of the episcopacy has no

geographical boundaries. Mr. Wesley said, "the world is my parish;" but a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church can say that in a sense more practically demonstrable than could Mr. Wesley himself; to complete an episcopal visitation literally requires a circumnavigation of the globe.

Again, the characteristic which, more than any other, has always been considered as distinguishing episcopacy from presbyterianism is, that, according to the latter, presbyters have no superiors, and are not subject to supervision; all ministers are *pastores gregis*; none are *pastores pastorum*; while, according to episcopacy, bishops have a supervision of the pastors. Now it is patent that the functions of a Methodist bishop pertain almost entirely to a supervision of the pastorate. Bishops have almost nothing to do with the people; indeed, nothing at all directly. It is sometimes said that the right of ordination pertains to the presbytery, and that the episcopacy are invested therewith by such a voluntary surrender as that bishops are only agents or officers of the presbytery; so that what the bishops do is *ipso facto* done by the presbytery itself. In like manner, and for a more obvious reason, it might be said that the right to choose his field of labor belongs to the individual minister, and that the Methodist itinerant has surrendered that right to the episcopacy in such a way that the bishop is his agent in making his appointment; so that in truth he appoints himself. And so, also, it may be said the people have a natural right to select their own pastors, but have so surrendered that right as that they do through the bishops make their own selections and receive pastors of their own appointment.

This idea, that the bishop is the agent or officer of the presbytery, and only that, is sometimes defended by the affirmation that ordination pertains to the presbytery in such a sense as that the presbytery has no right to divest itself of it. Hence, though it may delegate this power for a purpose and a time, it may not so alienate the power from itself as that it might not have constant control over it, and at any time resume it. That the presbytery has no right to alienate the right of ordination from itself seems to be considered by a class of writers on ecclesiastical polity as axiomatical, or, if not so, as a proposition to be admitted without controversy. For what reason this doctrine is so considered is not at all obvious to the present writer. Certainly, if this be so the Methodist Episcopal Church is in a hopeless condition of non-churchism; for, by the

unanimous consent of all its presbytery, the episcopacy have had, and for a century have exercised, the right of ordination exclusively. And as to the idea of a possible resumption of that power by the presbytery, it is evidently simply silly to make the supposition. The right of ordination and the power to station the pastors could not be taken from the episcopacy without a revolution; and if they were taken the resultant would be certainly not what the Methodist Episcopal Church is and always has been in fact, nor would it be what the Church is and has been in theory; it would be entirely another thing, both in fact and in theory.

As we understand the case, the reason why Methodist writers have so generally denominated our polity presbyterian and not episcopal, the reason why they affirm that we have two orders of ministers and not three, why they affirm that our bishops are *primi inter pares* and not ministers of a higher grade, is because they have seen no other way to avert the papistic sneer that high-episcopalians have been wont to cast upon us. Putting on airs, they have been accustomed to say to us, *You episcopalians! whence came your orders?* Mr. Wesley was only a presbyter—how could he confer what he did not himself possess? The true reply to such a contemptuous sneer is, a bold and confident affirmation: Yes, sir; we are episcopalians, as true and valid as the sun ever shone upon. You are not yourselves episcopalians in the sense you claim, in the sense of a divine right; for there are none such. Your apostolic succession is broken at so many points that it is no succession at all. Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke for the same reason that St. Paul ordained Timothy, for the reason that in his judgment he was providentially called thereto—

providential circumstances plainly indicating that the efficiency of the Church in propagating the Gospel of the Son of God would thereby be promoted, as was not possible by any other known procedure. The validity of Dr. Coke's ordination is not derived from Mr. Wesley's prerogatives as a presbyter in the Church of England, but from his authority as founder of the Methodist Church.

No pope, patriarch, bishop, archbishop, or apostle ever ordained a minister with clearer evidence that the thing was right and proper, and that therefore it might be reasonably inferred that it was in accordance

with the will of God, than Mr. Wesley had that the ordination of Dr. Coke by the imposition of his hands was divinely approved.

It is sometimes said that Mr. Wesley did not intend to authorize the establishment of an episcopal Church when he gave the societies in America a superintendent and a form of discipline, and the proof alleged is, that he called Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury superintendents, and rebuked them for allowing themselves to be called bishops. To anyone conversant with the facts this is too feeble to bear repetition, and is entirely undeserving of reply. The facts are: Mr. Wesley was by education a high-churchman. The reading of Stillingfleet's "Irenicum" cured him of that folly; but, as he himself said, he believed that an episcopal form of government, though not divinely required, is the best form known among men, and nearest to the New Testament model. He intended to give, and did give, that form to his societies in America. He avoided the term bishop, and rebuked Mr. Asbury for wearing it, because of the worldly pride, pomp, and ostentation with which that word was associated in English society; but the thing intended by the word, when properly used, he approved, and he gave the same to us when he ordained a bishop for us and authorized the organization of our Church.

4. The supreme power of the Methodist Episcopal Church is vested in the General Conference. The General Conference is the only legislative body in the Church; it has full power to make rules and regulations, under six restrictions.

These restrictive rules constitute the constitutional law of the Church.

In the government of the United States the Constitution specifies what Congress may do. All governmental matters not therein specified are reserved to the State governments; but in the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church the constitution specifies what the General Conference may not do, investing the Conference with full powers to do whatever is not thus prohibited. These restrictive rules may be changed by the concurrent votes of two-thirds of the members of the General Conference and three-fourths of all the members of the annual conferences.

The General Conference has judiciary functions in respect to the bishops;

it may be an original court of trial in case a charge of maladministration is preferred against a bishop at the Conference, and is entertained by it. It is the court of appeal in all cases where a bishop has by the judicial conference been convicted of immorality or of improper conduct.

The General Conference has sole power to elect the bishops, and the bishops are held strictly amenable to this Conference. Their Christian, moral, and official character, and their administration, are quadrennially reviewed by a committee of the Conference, consisting of one delegate from each of all the annual conferences, and if approved, on the recommendation of said committee, the character of the bishop is passed by a vote of the Conference. A more strict surveillance, a more rigid accountability, is scarcely possible in human affairs.

The General Conference fixes the boundaries of the annual conferences, and prescribes the functions of the judicial, the annual, and the quarterly conferences. Indeed, by its "full powers to make rules and regulations for our Church," it may be said to prescribe the rights and duties of all its constituents, of all the ministers and members of the Church, from senior bishop to youngest layman.

5. The Methodist Episcopal Church is not an aggregate of integers, but is itself an integer, a unit. This is a natural corollary from what has just been said of the powers and functions of the General Conference. The bishops, editors, agents, and secretaries elected by the General Conference are officers of the whole Church, their jurisdiction applying as perfectly at every point as at any point. The whole organization is so perfectly unified in the powers and functions of the General Conference that, by a not very wide latitude of expression, it may be said that every individual member of the Church is a member of the one whole, rather than of the local so-called Church where his name is recorded, which so-called local Church is itself a fractional part of a whole, and not an integer. By the constitution, nature, and polity of the organization the connectional principle extends to all that pertains to it.

6. To what form of civil government does the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church most nearly conform?

(1) Civil governments are sustained by physical force; the army and the

navy are always ready to enforce its decrees. Ecclesiastical governments are sustained only by the moral force of persuasion. Christ's kingdom is not of this, world; his servants do not fight. This difference is so fundamental, and so modifies the parts and the whole of both, that comparisons are well-nigh impossible.

(2) The Church, in its beginnings, is every-where missionary. The minister calls the people; he goes into the territory of an enemy; he proposes to them a system of doctrines and duties, and it is by their acceptance of what he proposes that they become members of the Church. All governmental powers are, by the head of the Church for the time being, vested in the missionary; and these powers are transmitted from the ministry to the laity as the latter advance in Christian culture, and themselves become co-workers together with him in the work of God. By the nature of the case, then, the Church commences in an absolute monarchy; and from that is transformed to a representative republic as its condition and circumstances allow of such transformation. Power is originally vested in the highest court, and descends from that to the lower; but when maturity is reached the current is reversed.

A pure democracy could never originate a Christian Church. Men must first be converted by the preaching of the Gospel before they will organize a Church, elect and ordain a minister.

(3) The Methodist Episcopal Church, as it now exists in these United States, conforms as near to a republic as the nature of the case allows. Our episcopacy exercise powers that are essential to the existence of a Church and it may therefore be said—it is said by our enemies—that our government is a pure aristocracy, or at least is aristocratic. We reply, The episcopacy derives its powers from the General Conference, and is strictly amenable to it. Our government therefore, though episcopal, is not so by the episcopacy as to constitute an aristocracy. The General Conference is itself a representative body. All its voting members are elected for one session only. With the final adjournment of each session the Conference itself dies, and its successor is a body newly elected by its constituents. The Conference is in no sense a close corporation, and its members are in no sense a governing class. Of course, no one will say that our government is a monarchy; no man of good sense will say that it, or any

other *government*, is a pure democracy. A pure democracy is the equivalent of anarchy. If our polity is not aristocratic, to what, then, may it be likened but to a republic? It is that nearly. If class-leaders were elected by the classes and stewards were elected by the societies, as trustees are elected, representation would be well-nigh complete. The leaders, stewards, trustees, and Sabbath-school superintendents, all laymen, make a large majority of the quarterly conference. By them license to preach is first granted; candidates for admission into the annual conference are recommended by them. No man can be authorized as a minister in the Church without a vote of the laity. The annual conference, then—not by a perfect representation; that, in the nature of the case, is impossible—does represent the quarterly conference, and through them the people. The General Conference is purely and perfectly a representative body, directly representing by elected delegates both the ministry and the laity.

7. The jurisprudence of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This may be judged of, and its application understood, by simply considering its fundamental principle. With one single exception every member of the Methodist Episcopal Church is, by constitutional provision, entitled, when accused, to a trial by a committee composed of his peers, and to an appeal.

The exception referred to is when a complaint is made to the General Conference against a bishop for maladministration, and is sustained. The original accusation being made in, and sustained by, the highest court in the Church, no appeal is possible. A private member, if accused, must be tried first by a committee composed of laymen, and if convicted may appeal to the quarterly conference. A local preacher is tried by the quarterly conference, and may appeal to the annual conference. A traveling preacher is tried by a committee of traveling preachers, members of his own conference, and if convicted, he may appeal to the judicial conference. Bishops, when accused of immorality or impropriety are tried by a judicial conference, and if convicted may appeal to the General Conference.

## OBJECTIONS.

Papists and High-churchmen object to the Methodist episcopacy that it is not in the regular apostolic succession, and therefore not by divine right, and therefore not valid. Those Presbyterians and Congregationalists, who believe that their form is the New Testament form, and that Christ and the apostles have, in the New Testament, signified their intent that that form should be perpetuated in the Church, object that our government contravenes the revealed will of God. These objections have been sufficiently answered above. The most common objection, however, and that in which declaimers are wont to indulge most profusely, is, that an episcopal form of government exalts the clergy, and gives them opportunity to lord it over God's heritage, and that it minifies the laity, oppresses them and deprives them of their rights. That an episcopacy does give to the officers of the Church rights and prerogatives is true; and the same thing is true of any government that is a government; without prerogatives in the ministry a Church cannot exist. But when it is said that the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church lord it over God's heritage, or that the membership of that Church are oppressed and deprived of their rights, a statement is made concerning facts that the facts themselves do not sustain.

That for a century episcopal power has been exercised among us without the occurrence of corruption or the abuse of power is sufficient proof that our episcopacy is properly guarded, that efficient and adequate checks are in operation. This last objection is sometimes formulated on this wise: The government of the Methodist Episcopal Church is not in harmony with, but is antagonistic to, the civil institutions of our country —it is not democratic but aristocratic, and tends towards Papacy and an absolute monarchy. This objection has been answered just above, but we answer, further, by confidently affirming that no Church polity in our land conforms more perfectly to the institutions of our country than does that of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

We leave those who entertain the objection to make the comparisons for themselves, and leave with them whatever advantage they may think they derive from so doing. With us the affirmation we make is obvious, and does not require specific vindication.

## THE ITINERANCY.

We have seen that the chief and distinguishing functions of the episcopal office are the ordination of ministers and their assignment to their fields of labor. These duties require that the bishops travel through the whole connection; they preside in the annual conferences and exercise a general supervision over all the interests of the Church. We have seen that by their office the Church is unified and the connectional principle sustained. But our theory of Church government allows that ordinations might be by the presbytery, and it is obvious that the unity of the Church has an adequate exponent and support in the General Conference. The practical utility of an episcopacy and the chief argument for it is found, then, in the fact that it is the most efficient, most economical, and most satisfactory method of effecting the annual changes required by our system of itinerancy.

But, it is asked, why this system? for what reasons has it been adopted, and why is it so persistently perpetuated? A system that requires for its perpetuity a power so ponderous as is the episcopal power, and one that may become so perilous, must be sustained, if at all, by very weighty arguments.

We reply, an intinerant ministry was not at first the result of a plan first proposed and then executed, but like every other peculiarity of Methodism it arose out of the necessities and exigencies of the times. Mr. Wesley and his assistants at first in England, and afterwards, more especially in America, were evangelists. They felt that a dispensation of the Gospel had been committed unto them, and they could not do otherwise with a good conscience before God than go from city to city, from place to place, and preach the Gospel unto the people. The special circumstances of their entire field in America, the sparse population, the pioneer condition of society, rendered it impossible for them to reach the people by any other means than by an intinerant ministry. Thus the institution arose—it was wondrously successful, and has, up to our times, been evidently blessed of God. Our argument for an intinerant ministry, then, in brief, is that it originated in a providential necessity, and has been, through all our history, eminently approved and blessed by the great Head of the Church. We should not feel at liberty to abandon the system if we desired so to do, without the clearest evidence that it was God's will it should be so abandoned. It must be conceded, for it is

obvious that when the Gospel is introduced into new territories the missionary must call the people, he must to some extent be a traveling minister; and when a minister labors in a district sparsely populated his parish must have large geographical dimensions, so that the Methodist circuit system, or something like it, is a necessity. But the queries of the objector have respect to the expediency of changing ministers from one field of labor to another. Why not allow the missionary to continue his missionary work till he has created a fixed parish, and then allow him to continue therein during life? Why may not the pastoral relation, when established between a given pastor and his people, be a permanent relation? The advantages accruing from a frequent change of pastors are several. 1. Every parish sufficiently large to sustain the stated means of grace contains a great diversity of character; men differ largely in constitutional temperaments, in educational predilections, in habits of thought, in classes of opinions, and these differences exist in every congregation. No one man can be an apostle to all these different classes of persons. In a pastorate of fifty years not more two or three extensive revivals of religion will be likely to occur—one soon after the pastor is installed, and the next one after another generation have arrived at maturity.

By a frequent change of pastors all classes of persons in the congregation stand a better chance to be appealed to by one adapted to reach and persuade them. 2. By a change of pastors the talents in the ministry are more widely disseminated, more equally distributed, and the brighter lights of the Church cast their effulgence over a larger area of mind. 3. A larger number of laborers may be employed in the vineyard by a changing than by a permanent pastorate. Men whose natural endowments and learned acquirements are entirely inadequate to a successful pastorate of long duration may be as useful for a short period of time as any others. 4. An intensity of feeling and a degree of interest in religion and in the services of the Church may be maintained by a diversity of talent in the pulpit that is impossible through the labors of a stated ministry. Men are naturally insensible to that with which they are familiar. To arouse attention and excite emotion, something new is required.

The old may satisfy the intellect, it indeed gratifies a natural love of the permanent, but it seldom rouses the slumbering, stirs the inactive, or

awakens the indifferent.

### OBJECTION.

It is sometimes said that evangelists awaken emotion; but it requires a pastorate of years to discipline the people in sound doctrine, and hence a changing ministry cannot produce those higher and more excellent forms of Christian life and character which are founded upon a broad and intelligent apprehension of Christian doctrine. We reply, by what does the successful evangelist awaken emotion, if not by an impressive presentation of the doctrines of religion? Who has the most perfect apprehension of divine truth, he that is unaffected by it, or he that is stirred to the depths of consciousness and moved to fervency of spirit and resistless activity? The idea that a staid, uniform, settled state of things is better for religion than a state of excitement is not well founded. The stable and the permanent is a good, if it be a good that is permanent; but in religious matters uniformity is possibly the product of indifference.

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END OF VOLUME 3